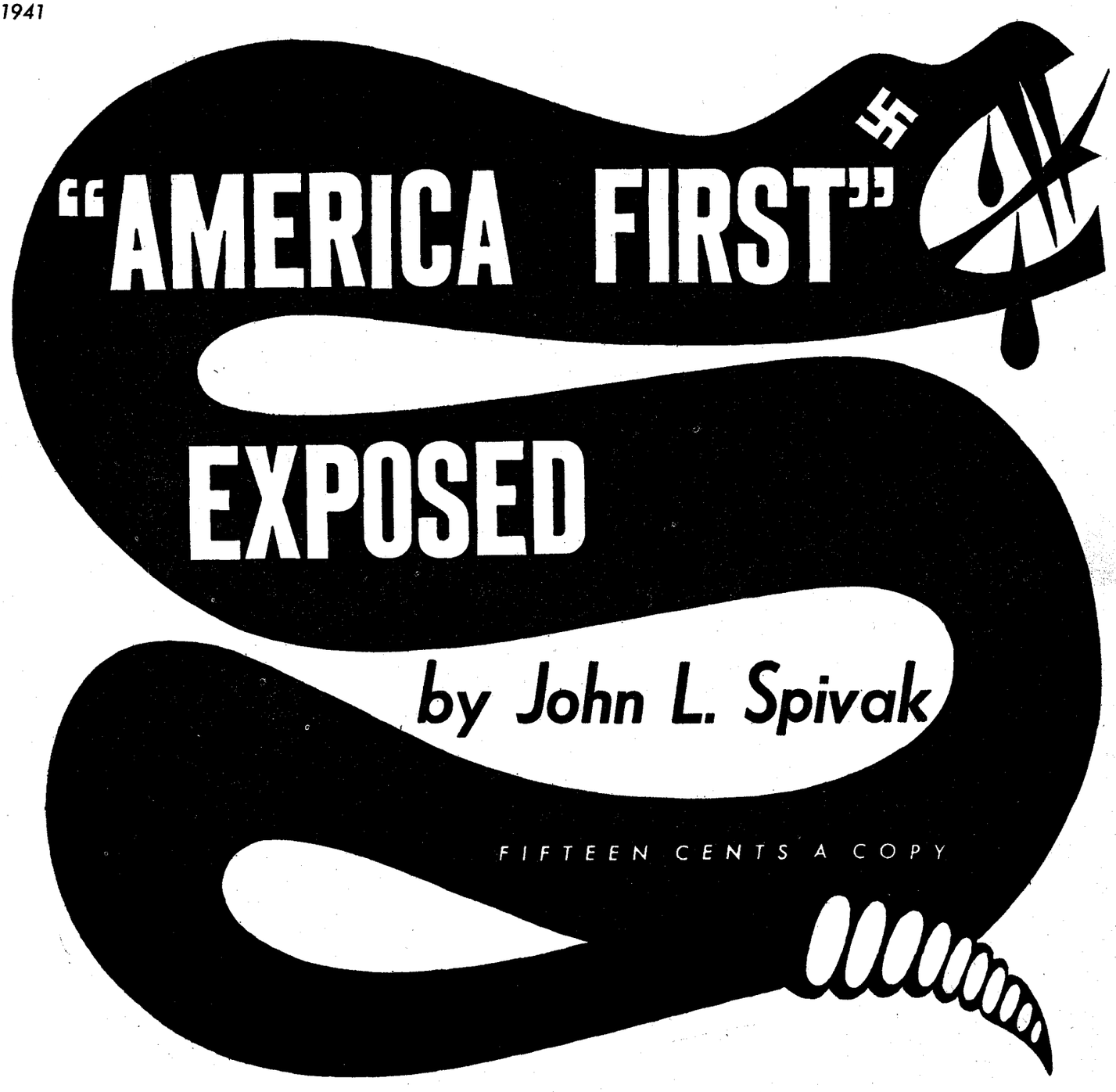
AMERICA'S STAKE ON THE EAST FRONT *by the Editors*

NEW MASSES

SEPT. 30, 1941



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NOT TOMORROW—TODAY

THIS has been a serious week for the whole anti-fascist world, the most difficult since the weeks that preceded June 22. It is difficult because Hitler's hordes are still continuing their savage incursion into the Soviet's most precious agricultural and industrial regions. Lunging and twisting, but still going forward, the full venom of the fascist reptile is being hurled against the Soviet citizenry: their second major city of Leningrad is under intense pressure and their hold on the Baltic has been weakened; the Dnieper River has been crossed and the Donets Basin now comes into the range of battle; the Crimean bastion of the Caucasus is under fire. But the week has been serious, not only in the military sense. It is equally grave because the anti-fascist world has not yet risen to its responsibilities, with anything like the boldness, the self-sacrifice, the grim calm of determination that the situation demands. After three long months, the war has not yet turned in favor of the anti-fascist cause, even though the opportunity was here as never before since the struggle for republican Spain.

In Britain this was "tanks for Russia" week. Squadrons of the Royal Air Force were fighting on the Eastern Front. Beaverbrook himself arrived in Moscow. The message from the garrison of Tobruk to the defenders of Odessa symbolized how deeply the potentialities of the Anglo-Soviet alliance have stirred the common people of Britain . . . and yet, despite the demand from the press, now including the powerful London *Times,* the British High Command still hesitates to open a front in western Europe. Why is this so? Explanations of a technical kind have been offered. Many suspicions are directed at men like Col. Moore-Brabazon, minister for aircraft production, whom Churchill has defended. Yet the plain fact is, as far as we Americans are concerned, that much of the hesitation in London results from the even greater hesitation, the lack of a sufficiently clear lead in Washington.

It is very good to hear from Averill Harriman, chief of our delegation to Moscow, that hundreds of American planes are arriving on Soviet soil. But the plain fact is that American aid, both for Britain and the Soviet Union, is still a shadow of what it ought to be, of what it must be. Criticism from the valiant British people, which Claude Cockburn describes elsewhere in this issue, is absolutely justified, let there be no mistake about that. As the President's report on the lend-lease program disclosed, only a fraction of the funds appropriated last March have been expended; only a small proportion has been sent across in materials; only a part of these materials were industrial goods—all in all, only *one percent* of the lend-lease appropriation, some $92,000,000 in value, consisted of implements of war. It is all very well for us to be irritated by the British reluctance to open a western front, but the blunt truth is that our own responsibilities to the British and the Soviet Union have only begun to be fulfilled. The United States—the great reservoir of industrial power—has only begun to get going. True, the big monopolists are responsible. True, the vacillations and flumdummery in the OPM are responsible. But in the last analysis, the American workingman, the anti-fascist progressive must take the responsibility upon himself.

In the first three months of the war millions of Americans had to be convinced that the Soviet resistance would be qualitatively different from that of all the other nations in Hitler's line of march to world power. That resistance is amazing the world, exceeding—as the newspapers admit—all their expectations. In the first three months of the war, once the President's policy of helping the Soviet Union was clearly declared, millions of unionists, teachers, writers, farmers ranged themselves behind that policy. Even though the CIO nationally failed to declare itself, there is no longer any doubt where the labor movement stands. And notwithstanding John L. Lewis' continued support for the appeasement bloc, tens of CIO unions, including districts of the United Mine Workers, have gone on record for an active anti-fascist policy. Thus a line of demarcation has developed between the overwhelming majority of the nation and the small handful in the America First Committee leadership, a line of demarcation between the enemies of Hitler and the friends of Hitler.

This phase of our struggle now reaches a certain climax, with the American Legion convention's decision to support aid for the USSR. The legion's withdrawal of its traditional opposition to another AEF, in fact, its willingness to support another AEF when necessary is of enormous significance. It emphasizes how *national* in character the movement for an active policy has become. It emphasizes the crystallization of a national front, of all forces and groups who favor military action against Hitler even though they proceed from different viewpoints. This national and all-inclusive development is already transforming all previous political relations, is already bringing about a certain disintegration of the isolationist bloc in Congress. The shift of such men as Capper from Kansas, of Dirsken from Illinois, of Taft from Ohio, to the support of the lend-lease program now makes the fight for including the Soviet Union in the lend-lease program a fight that can definitely be won. The real chance of passing the second lend-lease program and the price control legislation without submitting to the isolationist filibuster is a reflection of the readiness of the people for a more definite, far-reaching, challenging initiative from the White House.

Yet it is also true that in the first flush of general enthusiasm over the Soviet people's epic sacrifice, two dangerous tendencies developed in the anti-fascist camp, tendencies which the events of the week have so thoroughly exposed. Take a columnist like Walter Lippmann, who speaks for certain capitalist circles supporting the Roosevelt administration. In the last few weeks Lippmann has been chattering about the possibilities of peace with a "legitimate" German government, after Hitler had been overthrown; and he even goes so far as to suggest that the Navy's active participation in convoying and "shooting first" now makes it possible to demobilize the army—and all this, on the assumption

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All-out aid to the Red Army now will turn the tide against Hitler. The events of the week and what America must do.

that the anti-fascist victory is now assured as a result of Soviet resistance. So also, in these anti-fascist circles who were friendly to the Soviet Union for years, some people have permitted themselves illusions that the Red Army could take care of Hitler alone. In their understandable pride and admiration for the Soviet stand, they have permitted themselves a dangerous relaxation, conceptions that the fight against fascism was entering its last stages.

Both of these tendencies, coming from opposite directions—and both of them within the anti-fascist camp—represent the most dangerous kind of development. These are tendencies that demobilize, instead of mobilizing; these are attitudes that delay, instead of hastening victory. The truth is that our national security has not yet been secured. The truth is that Hitler commands the resources of all Europe; the industrial furnaces of northern France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Czechoslovakia, western Poland, and northern Italy represent an aggregation of capacity for making munitions of every kind that is greater that the Soviet Union's capacity—let there be no illusion about that. Wars are not won by numbers of men, and not alone by the morale of men. They are won by *material,* plus morale, plus men. Hitler may not have the morale, but he still has the material, and thus far, he has thrown his manpower in with enough force to inflict serious and even menacing blows against the Soviet defenders.

But the greater truth is that the anti-fascist world has yet to gain the initiative. Unless we take advantage of this moment, the enemy will use those advantages against us. It is not accidental that in the week of Kiev's fall, correspondents from Washington reported that negotiations between the United States and Japan had reached a standstill. The possibility remains very real that instead of being deterred by the potentially overwhelming strength of the anti-fascist world, the Japanese militarists, with their eyes on the Eastern Front, may choose the moment to attack in the south Pacific or in Siberia. And in both cases, our fleet would be detained in the Pacific, and our national security gravely menaced. The same goes for the Near East where the Nazis are placing great pressure on Turkey, by way of involving Bulgaria in the war. The entire V campaign is now at stake. The crisis which confronts the Nazis in Norway and France and Serbia, forcing them to declare martial law in these countries, and forcibly repress their populations, can either develop as a powerful *inner front* for the Anglo-Soviet-American bloc, or else that inner front may weaken in the face of reverses which the anti-fascist forces are suffering on other fronts. Thus all factors in this war, military and political, are now in solution.

The situation calls for the most deliberate, stubborn, determined action that our nation can muster. It calls for the kind of dedication which men and women are capable of, when they realize fully that a whole world is at stake, the world we shall live in the rest of our lives, the world we shall leave to our children. It calls for setting aside every prejudice, every personal concern, every underestimation of the task that confronts us.

The situation calls for the strongest, boldest action that the President has yet taken in his whole career. Every phase of our defense preparation must be subordinated to the single problem of getting bombers, tanks, and other vital materials to the Eastern Front. Priorities, allocations, supplies must be revised so that a mighty flow of supplies crosses the South Atlantic by air, across Alaska, across the Pacific and the North Atlantic by sea. Immediate assistance to the USSR must take precedence over production for all other arms of our defense—there is absolutely no point in sidetracking huge amounts of productive capacity for some future defense of our country unless we send to the utmost for the immediate defense of our country on the Eastern Front. The time to defend the United States is when we have powerful allies in Britain and the Soviet Union—failing them, we shall simply be cutting our own throats.

The President must take the entire production problem in hand. A situation must never again develop where reactionary senators like Harry Byrd of Virginia get the opportunity to exploit the weaknesses of our defense effort, thereby making grist for the appeasement mill, and undermining the authority of the Executive himself. The President has got to take the common people into his confidence. Shortcomings must be admitted publicly—not for the sake of partisan criticism—but for the sake of overcoming those shortcomings. Above all, the labor movement, in all its branches, has got to turn its entire attention to improving, speeding, assisting, facilitating the production of war materials—making sacrifices if necessary, stirring the entire nation with the example of what the men in the plants, the men on the assembly lines themselves can do. And side by side with all the detailed, everyday practical measures of improving production must go the campaign for money, cigarettes, medical supplies for the Soviet and British people, part of that great consolidation of the anti-fascist forces on an international scale, which is our great weapon against fascism.

The tide can be turned against Hitler in the next few weeks. The Soviet people are fighting with greater tenacity than ever. They are beating back the invader at Leningrad; their Baltic and Black Sea fleets are active. Budenny's armies have apparently emerged from the Kiev area, and are ranged east of the Dnieper intact. In the central zone Timoshenko's relentless hammering is a factor of long-term significance, and will become more menacing to the German advance in the Ukraine as time goes on. There is room neither for pessimism nor illusions—only those who permitted themselves illusions will now be pessimistic.

The war can be immeasurably shortened, and all of the factors which are now in solution can be crystallized in our side, to the disadvantage of the enemy. The lives and treasure of literally millions of Soviet citizens can be saved, and in so doing—a world can be saved from the barbarism which Germany plans for the democratic peoples of the entire globe. The war can be shortened, and we ourselves can be spared years of hardship and suffering—if every energy is rallied, every avenue of immediate anti-fascist action is explored in the very next weeks. There are no automatic guarantees of victory except as the anti-fascist forces are thoroughly, unremittingly aroused. THE EDITORS.

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NEW MASSES

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BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE . . .

An Editorial

IN PRESENTING the opening article in this series by John L. Spivak, NEW MASSES is happy to be the first magazine in the country to turn the spotlight on the inner machinations of the misnamed America First Committee. A vast conspiracy against our country is now under way. The Nazi spies on trial in New York are only the most obvious and perhaps not the most dangerous manifestation of this conspiracy. More insidious, because they operate under respectable auspices and seek to inject their poison into millions, are the American Quislings and Vichymen at the head of the America First Committee and their appeaser allies like Herbert Hoover, William Randolph Hearst, Father Coughlin, and such newspapers as the Scripps-Howard press, the Chicago *Tribune,* and the New York *Daily News.*

Mr. Spivak's investigation of the America First Committee is begun long before Charles A. Lindbergh took his flight into anti-Semitism. Lindbergh's was not a solo flight, for he has been joined by Sen. Gerald P. Nye, star of the anti-Semitic senatorial vendetta against the movie industry. This desperate resort to the Nazi tactic of Jew-baiting has revealed the appeasers in their true colors and served to arouse the public to the menace of the America First Committee. But it would be a mistake to conceive the issue solely in terms of anti-Semitism. That would play into the hands of the home-grown fascists and appeasers, many of whom would be able to clear their skirts by dissociating themselves from Lindbergh's speech while continuing to support his larger pro-Hitler objectives. Let us not be deceived by the particular garb which appeasement may wear. Whether they openly back the Nazis, as does Coughlin, or counsel, as does Hoover, that America need not help stop Hitler because Hitler will collapse of his own accord; whether they incite against the Jews in the manner of Lindbergh, or pretend, a la Hearst, to be against anti-Semitism, these men are today advocating for America the same policy which Petain and Darlan pursue in France. That policy would convert this country into a colony of Hitler and leave him master of the world.

NEW MASSES has consistently fought against fascism and all forms of pro-fascist appeasement. In 1934, in a series by John L. Spivak, we exposed the Nazi spy ring and the native anti-Semites and fascists operating in this country. The following year we revealed the details of the plot to bribe the late Gen. Smedley Butler to head a fascist coup against the government. This magazine was also the first to raise the alarm about Father Coughlin. And we denounced Lindbergh as a racist and fascist as far back as our Nov. 14, 1939, issue. From the inception of the America First Committee, at a time when friends of the Soviet Union were themselves falsely accused in certain quarters of being appeasers, NEW MASSES fought this organization and exposed the pro-fascist and imperialist objectives of its leaders. (See particularly our Jan. 7, 1941, issue.) Our present series on America First is thus part of a struggle which we have waged uncompromisingly over the course of years.

Today the issue of fascism confronts the American people with a new and compelling urgency. The power of Hitlerism, built up by the appeasers in the British, French, and American ruling classes, rages against the peoples of the world. Thanks to the influence of their own Lindberghs and General Woods, nation after nation has fallen. Gorged with the loot of Europe, Hitler and his jackal "allies" have attacked the one country that prepared to resist them, the Soviet Union. Victory will make him master of Europe and Asia. Victory will enable him to encircle, besiege and overwhelm the Americas. We do not speak merely of physical conquest, which may not be at all necessary. We speak rather of the conquest of the political and social life of our country, of its existence as an independent nation. Petain's France is only a small scale model of what America would become if the Nazis vanquish the USSR.

Yet in this situation the Lindberghs, Hoovers, and Hearsts demand that the American people do nothing to halt the Nazi juggernaut, but await with folded arms their own destruction. Perhaps the cleverest of these devil's advocates is Herbert Hoover. It is quite natural that the man who was deaf to the cries of the hungry when he was President, the man who sent the troops against the bonus marchers should feel a common bond with the Nazi perpetrators of violence and mass hunger. Out of fear and hatred of democracy, men like Hoover, Lindbergh, and General Wood are ready to barter away even the interests of their own class and convert the American capitalists into the subalterns of the German financial and industrial tycoons. And trotting at the heels of these Hitler First gentlemen is a labor leader, John L. Lewis, a one-time liberal, John T. Flynn, and a "Socialist," Norman Thomas. Hoover, however, is too wily to bring his true objectives into the open. He does not even flatly oppose the Roosevelt foreign policy; his is a more subtle dagger. In his radio speech on September 16 he professed to favor aid to Britain and to oppose isolationism. Yet his practical proposals—that the United States refuse assistance to the Soviet Union and remain aloof from the war, trusting that "Hitler collapses of his own overreaching"—would inevitably doom Britain and the United States. What more could Hitler ask?

The leaders of the America First Committee and their fellow-appeasers have the effrontery to spread their pernicious propaganda in the name of peace. The American people, in common with the peoples of other countries, deeply desire peace. But it is the vilest hypocrisy when these appeasers, who helped Hitler unloose this terrible war, seek to exploit the people's yearning for peace in order to further the Nazi dream of world conquest. But though they have succeeded in snaring some honest people with their "peace" propoganda and in confusing others, the overwhelming majority of Americans know that it is easier to make peace with a jungle tiger than with Hitler. Increasingly they are realizing that genuine peace can come only through the military defeat and annihilation of Hitlerism. Today, with the United States for all practical purposes involved in the war against Hitlerism, with all our energies needed to wage this war to a successful conclusion, the activities of these appeasers are nothing less than treason to America. That is an ugly word. But it is no more ugly than the deeds which it describes.

NEW MASSES believes that the facts presented in this series of articles warrant a congressional investigation of the America First Committee and the whole appeasement group. A copy of this issue of NEW MASSES is being sent to every member of Congress and to a number of prominent individuals. Let us learn the lesson of France. Let us act before it is too late.

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"AMERICA FIRST" EXPOSED

by John L. Spivak

A Pair of Parachutists: Rudolph Hess at Munich tells Charles A. Lindbergh how it's done.

The first time that the entire sordid story of "America First" has been revealed. The mysterious seven who dictate policy. Who are the pay-off men? Confessions of anti-Semitism. Why William R. Castle, Herbert Hoover's braintruster, told Spivak that a certain letter was "very embarrassing."

THE America First Committee has an attractive name. It professes to be for America first as against the interests of other countries. It speaks in the name of peace and opposes the foreign policy of the Roosevelt administration. It has money and a considerable organizational apparatus. Full page ads, public rallies, radio hookups, and a ceaseless barrage of mail flow from the committee in an effort to influence the country. The appeal is always on a "patriotic," "nationalistic," and "peace" basis. Many honest Americans accept that appeal at face value. Very few know anything of the organization, have any inkling of the Gestapo-like secrecy which veils the behind-the-scenes activities of the America First Committee. And the average America First member is completely in the dark as to the identity of those who are really financing this enormous propaganda machine.

America First is, of course, a misnomer. It should be America Next. For the leaders of the America First Committee are the American Vichymen. They are attempting to do to this country what Petain, Laval, and Darlan have done to France. When I tried to find out something about this influential organization, I was amazed at the veil of secrecy thrown over even its simplest activities. For patriots fighting for their country's best interests as they saw them, they were awfully nervous and secretive.

Such information as I did get convinced me that the United States, for its own protection, had better launch an official inquiry into this body to determine who is actually financing it and what contacts some of its leaders may have with Nazi agents. What I learned and will present in these articles shows that:

1. The America First Committee, while trying to create the impression that it has a large mass following, is run and chiefly financed by a small clique of "smart money" boys.

2. Its national committee, the guiding body which decides policies, has pro-Hitlerites and anti-Semites on it, and members of this guiding body were put on or dropped at the will of the small group of men actually running the organization without consulting the rest of the national committee members, or even informing them of the changes.

3. The America First Committee has offered to work secretly with known pro-fascists.

4. The America First Committee uses notorious anti-Semites as official speakers.

5. The America First Committee has received a minimum of over $1,000,000 from unidentified sources for its propaganda work.

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Copperhead Lindbergh

IS CHARLES A. LINDBERGH the American Quisling? If actions mean anything, he has the qualifications and aspirations for the job. The chief difference between Lindbergh and Quisling is that Hitler has not yet conquered the United States as he conquered Norway. But Lindbergh's activities and his publicly expressed opinions indicate that he is in truth, as NEW MASSES described him in its Jan. 7, 1941, issue, "our foremost Nazi."

In his Des Moines speech on September 11 Lindbergh touched new depths of un-Americanism when he attacked the Jews. This marked a new stage in the America First Committee's desperate effort to prevent this country from combating the Hitler threat to its independence. Millions of Americans were shocked by Lindbergh's Jew-baiting, but, as a matter of fact, appeals to race prejudice are nothing new for him. In his speeches and magazine articles Lindbergh has frequently introduced unmistakable innuendoes. Typical was his article in the November 1939 issue of *Readers Digest*. He wrote:

"And while we stand poised for battle, Oriental guns are turning westward, Asia presses toward us on the Russian border, all foreign races stir restlessly. It is time to turn from our quarrels and to build our white ramparts again. . . . Our civilization depends . . . on a western wall of race and arms which can hold back either a Genghis Khan or the infiltration of inferior blood; on an English fleet, a German air force, a French army, an American nation, standing together as guardians of our common heritage. . . . "

This Nazi racist verbiage, translated into the language of practical politics, means only one thing: that this apostle of "peace" wants a united war against the Soviet Union and the oppressed peoples of Asia. That is Hitler's policy. What Lindbergh objects to is that the United States and Britain are not helping Hitler.

Even before he entered the arena of public controversy, Lindbergh had revealed strong pro-fascist tendencies. In 1938 he was responsible for spreading the story that Germany was all-powerful in the air and that the Soviet air force was weak and insubstantial. This was the story that helped Chamberlain put over the Munich betrayal. Shortly after Munich Lindbergh visited Germany, on which occasion Goering rewarded him with a Nazi medal. When the Nazis launched the terrible anti-Jewish pogroms that shocked the world, Lindbergh showed where his sympathies lay by announcing that he planned to take up residence in Berlin during the winter of 1938-39. On the advice of friends, however, he reluctantly abandoned this plan.

Lindbergh is today the idol of various anti-Semitic and fascist groups, the fuehrer to whom they look for leadership in the campaign to make America Hitler's next victim. Symbolically enough, his home on Long Island's fashionable north shore used to be the headquarters of Benjamin Thompson, otherwise known as Count Rumford, one of the leading Tories, that is, traitors, in the War of Independence. President Roosevelt last April found another appropriate symbol for Lindbergh when he compared him to one of the Civil War's most notorious Copperheads, Clement L. Vallandigham of Ohio. It might be recalled that the Union Army found it necessary to court-martial and imprison Vallandigham.

NEW MASSES believes the time has come for Congress to find out just what this modern Copperhead is doing to deserve Goering's medal. How long will we permit traitors and fifth columnists to plot against our freedom?

6. The America First Committee flatly refused to check a dozen names, suspected of being channels for Nazi money passed on to the committee.

7. *Scribner's Commentator,* voice of America First's leading spokesman, Charles A. Lindbergh, who is an active member of its national committee, is secretly filing and coding lists of persons throughout the country who have been duped into lending support to the appeasers. Henry Ford is paying the bill.

8. The editor of *Scribner's Commentator* was in close contact with a Nazi emissary when the former arranged a session between ex-Col. Charles A. Lindbergh and a notorious pro-fascist.

9. America First Committee leading members established and financed subsidiary organizations which handled contacts with pro-Nazi and anti-Semitic groups, such as Coughlinites, which the parent body didn't want to handle directly.

10. The America First Committee is the most dangerous potential fascist body ever organized in the United States.

Wherever the inquiry into the organization turned, I found secrecy. Even the humble stenographers working in America First offices were cautioned to be on their guard, as in the memo issued by Robert L. Bliss, director of organization for the New York Chapter of the Committee: "I suggest that you conduct all your meetings in your office as quietly as possible and that you do not discuss confidential business matters in the hall or going to and from the teletype. This will prevent visitors in the outer office overhearing remarks. . . . [Signed] R. L. B."

I had the same feeling while working on this organization that I had in France while looking into the Croix de Feu, the fascist organization which was the precursor of the groups that helped bring that unhappy country to its knees in thirty-nine fateful days. The Croix de Feu was run by native Frenchmen, but with Nazi agents in the background. It was supported by a handful of "big money" boys and numbered among its members active and reserve officers of the French armed forces. It, too, had a carefully filed list of all potential fascists for use at some future date which came all too soon. An investigation of this fascist body, started by the French government, was suppressed because too many men high in the country's political and economic life were involved. The French people were never told the facts; today the French republic is shattered and its citizens are under the Nazi heel.

Let me state that from all I could learn, the overwhelming majority of America First members are sincere people misled by America First propaganda into thinking that its foreign policy is best for the country. Outside of the public utterances of men like Lindbergh and Sen. Burton K. Wheeler of Montana, no idea is given as to what goes on within the organization's inner circle. Not

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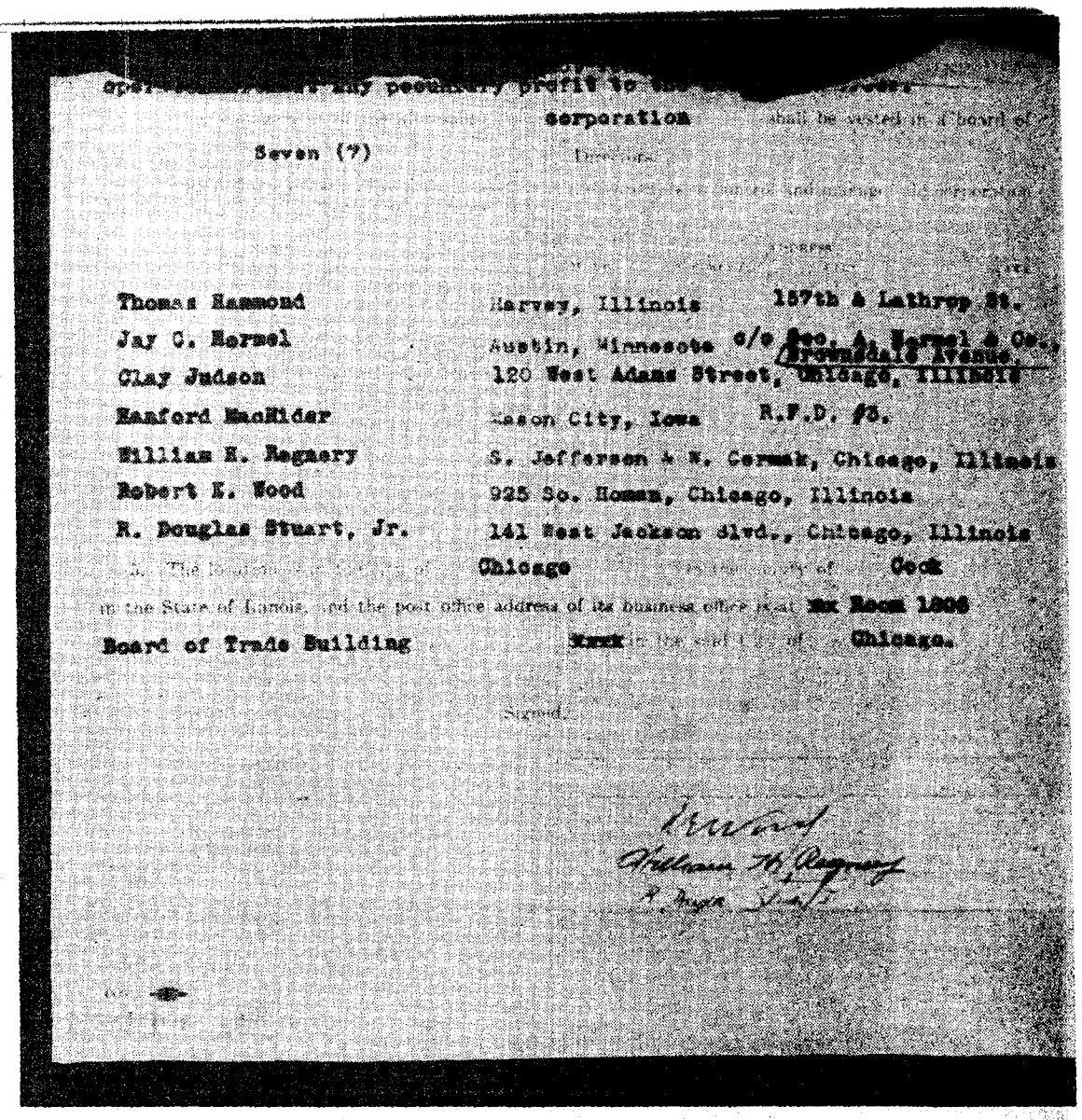
even all the members of the national committee are told everything.

THE AMERICA FIRST COMMITTEE was originally born in the mind of R. Douglas Stuart, Jr., a twenty-four-year-old law student at Yale, who is the son of the first vice president of the Quaker Oats Co. Stuart's idea got a little local publicity and a cordial note from Gen. Robert E. Wood, chairman of Sears Roebuck & Co. When Stuart went home to Chicago on his school vacation last year, the general and the youngster talked it over. Before long the wide-eyed, politically immature but ambitious boy was introduced, as he expressed it naively, to the "smart money" crowd. Among them were William H. Regnery, a Chicago multimillionaire, and Clay Judson, a Chicago attorney for some of the "smart money" boys. After several conferences Wood, Regnery, Judson, and young Stuart decided to incorporate the idea into an organization. On Sept. 19, 1940, the America First Committee began to function legally as a non-profit-making corporation.

One of the objectives of the committee was the "giving of help to refugees and the needy of other lands" with the idea of cooperating with Herbert Hoover's "Let's feed Europe" plan, but this proposed activity was promptly forgotten. Actually the committee's public activity centered around promoting appeasement. Wood, Regnery, and Stuart handpicked a body to serve as a national committee which was supposed to help formulate the organization's policies and direct its work. Actually, the national committee was and still is just a list of names on a letterhead. Only half a dozen persons in the organization really decide on policy and direct the work. When it seems advisable to General Wood, acting chairman of the America First Committee, to drop any of the national committee members and put on new ones, he does so without even informing the other committee members. It's what is known in business vocabulary as a closed corporation and in political vocabulary as dictatorship.

In the advertising world they still talk about how the "smart money boys" got advice from some of the best public relations and advertising men in the country, including ex-Congressman Bruce Barton's firm, Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn Inc. (whose assistance was obtained by Jay C. Hormel of Hormel Ham, Spam, etc.). The cooperation was given very quietly, for none of the agencies wanted to antagonize clients who opposed America First ideas. The public relations experts suggested that the committee start out with a bang by running a full page ad in the New York *Times* which would both attract national attention and at the same time get across considerable propaganda to an influential reading public. "The incorporators paid for the ad," as America First's director of organization explained it to me. With this public announcement America First was launched on its career.

It is significant to note some of the changes



operations for any pecuniary profit to the [illegible] members.

The number of Directors of the corporation shall be vested in a board of Seven (7) Directors.

Thomas Hammond	Harvey, Illinois	157th & Lathrop St.
Jay C. Hormel	Austin, Minnesota	c/o Geo. A. Hormel & Co., Brundage Avenue.
Clay Judson	120 West Adams Street, Chicago, ILLINOIS	
Sanford MacNider	Mason City, Iowa	R.F.D. #3.
William H. Regnery	S. Jefferson & W. Cermak, Chicago, Illinois	
Robert E. Wood	925 So. Homan, Chicago, Illinois	
R. Douglas Stuart, Jr.	141 West Jackson Blvd., Chicago, Illinois	

3. The location of the principal office of the corporation is in the City of Chicago County of Cook in the State of Illinois, and the post office address of its business office is at Room 1806 Board of Trade Building Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.

Signed

William H. Regnery

R. Douglas Stuart, Jr.

THE SEVEN DIRECTORS *who "control and manage" America First as revealed in the incorporation papers. Millionaire Regnery works closely with pro-Nazi Avery Brundage. Gen. Wood manipulates national committee membership as he sees fit. Wood, Regnery, lawyer Clay Judson, and R. Douglas Stuart, Jr., who first thought of the idea, run America First to suit themselves. The membership at large has no voice in committee affairs.*

from the original committee. Avery Brundage and Henry Ford, both known to be sympathetic to the Nazis, were on it and there was one Jew, Lessing J. Rosenwald. They are no longer on the committee. Brundage was asked to leave "because of his anti-Semitism, though we know nothing about it," as an official spokesman for the committee put it. Henry Ford was dropped—just dropped, and the committee's spokesman insists that Ford's anti-Semitic activities and reputation had nothing to do with it. Ford and Brundage were dropped, as it became evident to me, *not* because America First is opposed to anti-Semitism, but because the committee wanted to keep its skirts clear. Rosenwald resigned. As America First explained it through its spokesman: "He's a Jew. Figure it out for yourself."

Lindbergh was not on the original committee because he was known to be strongly pro-Nazi and had been closely associated with the British appeasers who instigated the Munich deal with Hitler. Until recently Stuart denied that he had ever met Lindbergh and that because of Lindbergh's reputation America First was afraid to tie up with him. They met only when Lindbergh "dropped in" on America First offices "after reading one of the full page ads published by the organization."

So many conflicting stories are told by Stuart as to how the leading appeasers in the country were brought together by America First that any, or none, of the half dozen versions might be the correct one. Who brought them together is important. As I shall show in a subsequent article, Lindbergh was put in touch with the No Foreign War Committee, an offshoot of America First, by persons having close contacts with a Nazi emissary. These conflicting stories on how Lindbergh finally became an active member of America First's national committee serve to illustrate again the secrecy surrounding even such matters as how and through whom they met.

America First also wanted its skirts clear of open association with "labeled elements" like Bundists, Coughlinites, and their ilk. In the business world, when a big corporation does not want to handle certain phases of a business, "independent" organizations are set up to handle them with one or more directors of the parent company sitting in as directors of the subsidiary company. This has been the technique employed by the America First Committee in regard to "labeled elements." I

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shall discuss this aspect of its work in a subsequent article.

I WANTED to ask America First officials some questions about their organizational setup and the sources of their finances. I went to Chicago where the national offices occupy half of the eighteenth floor of the huge Board of Trade Building. Again I was impressed with the nervous secrecy which hung over the place. There seemed to be an unusual amount of whispering and sign language. When I asked to see young Stuart, he sent word out that he was seeing no one. General Wood, acting chairman of America First, had left town and had also left orders that no one was to talk. When I persisted in seeing a spokesman for the organization, Stuart finally sent Richard A. Moore, the national office's director of organization. Moore, a tall, red-headed fellow in his early thirties with a Cassius-like look on his face, explained nervously that every one would be happier if I talked with the general—and the general, happily, was away. And what did I want, nd was I an interventionist? And I at 8:19 on the night of June 17?

After thirty minutes of this stalling a rather nice looking, clean cut youngster came out, hesitatingly introduced himself as Stuart, and personally explained that General Wood had told him to keep his mouth shut.

"Isn't anyone in charge when the general's away?" I asked.

"Yes, I'm in charge," he said, backing away, "but I prefer that General Wood give the interview."

He looked as if he were about to vanish into the inner recesses of the national offices. I had a hunch, from what I had learned of the organization, that the one thing they were touchy on was their reported friendliness to Nazi views and I said: "All I want are some facts. This is a patriotic body and every real patriot I ever met was glad to shout his patriotism—even from the top of the Board of Trade Building. The only ones who were fearful were a lot of phonies working with Nazis——"

My hunch was correct. Stuart shrank back another step.

"Nazis?" gulped Mr. Moore.

The two exchanged glances.

"Perhaps Mr. Moore can help you out," said Stuart quickly, and then disappeared.

"Come into my office," said Moore.

"You know," I said when he had shown me to a seat, "that there are rumors that the America First Committee is working for the interests of the Nazis——"

"Yes, I know," said Moore, nodding his head and turning uncomfortably in his swivel chair.

"Now, some of your original national committee members are reputed to be friendly to the Nazis, so I thought I'd ask how they got on and why they are no longer with the committee. Henry Ford, for instance."

"Oh, I think Mr. Ford was asked to lend his name to the committee's work and when he didn't do any work and made no contributions, we dropped him."

"His name is still good on a letterhead. Why did you drop him?"

"He did no work and didn't contribute any money," Moore repeated.

"Are those the only reasons?"

"Yes. That is, why, ye-e-es."

"I heard it was because he was generally considered sympathetic to the Nazis, anti-Semitic, and you wanted to avoid that label——"

"Aw, I've heard a lot about Mr. Ford's anti-Semitism and pro-Nazism but none of that's ever been proved, you know."

"It's never been proved that Ford published and distributed anti-Semitic propaganda?"

"No, sir!" he said emphatically.

"All right. How did you drop Ford and what did he say?"

"Oh, we just dropped him."

"But people don't just drop Ford. He's the one who usually does the dropping."

"We just dropped him," Moore repeated, and added, "you know, we never got a nickel from him, directly or indirectly." His repeated emphasis that Ford had made no contributions made me wonder why he was so anxious for that impression to be circulated. While I was wondering, he suddenly asked, "Did you hear anything to the effect that he had?"

"Yes. I heard you got money through Harry Bennett, head of Ford's secret service, who arranged for meetings between Ford and the editor and publisher of *Scribner's Commentator.*"

"Bennett," he said. "Never heard the name before."

"How was Ford dropped?" I persisted. "By wire, phone call, letter, or what?"

"I don't know," said Moore. "General Wood handled the whole thing personally and he's away. There's nothing in our files about it. It could have been handled by the general through his personal correspondence.

"Do matters involving the national committee concern him only or the entire membership?"

"The entire membership. Naturally."

"Was the rest of the national committee consulted about dropping Ford?"

"I don't know," said Moore. "I don't suppose so. I think the general handled it personally."

MERWIN K. HART. *As head of the New York State Economic Council this notorious anti-Semite and pro-fascist cooperated with Franco's agents during the Spanish civil war. He has been quietly working with America First leadership ever since the committee was organized.*

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"Am I to understand that members of the national committee, which is supposed to decide on policies, are put on and taken off at General Wood's whim without the rest of the committee having anything to say about it?"

"Well, I wouldn't say that——"

"What would you say?"

"Well, I guess that's a matter you'd better take up with the general."

"All right. What happened to Avery Brundage? He was on your national committee."

"All you can say about him," said Moore quickly, "is that he was dropped because of his anti-Semitism." His face got red and he added, "Now get me right on this. We don't know anything about that. I mean his anti-Semitism. You understand that. We don't know if he's anti-Semitic. But there are a lot of people who think so and we didn't want to get mixed up in that sort of stuff. We don't want to make an issue of it, so he was dropped."

"Were the rest of the national committee consulted about dropping him?"

"I think the general handled it personally."

"Without consulting the rest of the national committee?"

"I don't know," said Moore.

"What I'm trying to get at," I explained, "is whether General Wood is the whole works, including the national committtee, or whether the national committee has anything to say about what America First does?"

"Of course they do!"

"Then aren't they consulted about matters like dropping members of the policy-making body?"

"I believe they are consulted."

"Were they consulted about dropping Ford?"

"I don't know. I couldn't say. The general handled it personally."

"Was there a vote taken about dropping Brundage because of his reported anti-Semitism?"

"I don't know. I don't suppose so. You don't take a vote on matters like that."

"That's what I'm getting at. Then who decides whom to drop from the policy-making body?"

"I think—I'm sure that's a question for the general to answer."

"All right. What about Lessing J. Rosenwald, who was on the original national committee?"

"Well," he smiled, "figure it out for yourself. He's a Jew. All I can say is he resigned."

America First Committee

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS • 1000 BOARD OF TRADE BUILDING • CHICAGO

TELEPHONE HARRISON 0000-0007

September 30 1940

R. DOUGLAS STUART, JR., 0000000

Mr. Merwin K. Hart, President
New York State Economic Council, Inc.,
500 Fifth Ave.,
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Hart:-

I am very sorry that I neglected to communicate with you sooner.

I have turned over in my mind the advisability of setting up a chapter of the America First Committee through your organization. Having discussed it with some of the members of the Committee, I have come to the conclusion that it would be a mistake. The paramount objection is, that your organization has been identified with a certain point of view, and our chapter of the America First Committee would immediately have a similar label attached to it. This I believe would be unfortunate.

However, as I stressed to you, it is imperative that we work together on these things. I will let you know the name of the man who will be chairman of our new York Chapter within a few days. I hope you will be able to work with him.

Thanking you for your cooperation and interest.

Sincerely yours,

R. Douglas Stuart, Jr.
Director

R. DOUGLAS STUART, JR., *a director and founder of America First, informs fascist sympathizer Merwin K. Hart that it would be a mistake to be identified with him openly but that they can work together secretly.*

HE WAS decidedly unhappy by now and there was no use making him unhappier on this aspect of America First activities, so I switched to another angle.

"Can you tell me how much Sterling Morton of Morton Salt gave America First?"

"Why do you want to know about him?" Moore asked suspiciously.

"I know Morton is one of your heavy contributors. He was also a contributor to Harry A. Jung's American Vigilant Intelligence Federation, an anti-Semitic organization which distributed the 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion.' Jung has worked with Nazi agents operating secretly in this country. Naturally, when I find a man who contributed to Jung is also a heavy contributor to America First——"

"I don't know anything about that," Moore interrupted. "I don't know where you get your facts."

"It was uncovered by a congressional committee investigating subversive activities in the United States." (I was referring to the Dickstein-McCormack investigation in 1934.)

"Well, we certainly have nothing to do with Nazis or fascists. That's definite," said Moore.

"Can you tell me what the relationship is between America First and Merwin K. Hart?"

"None," he said quickly and looked up at the ceiling as if trying to recollect the name. "I've heard the name some place."

"Hart is head of the New York Economic Council and is a prominent pro-fascist who

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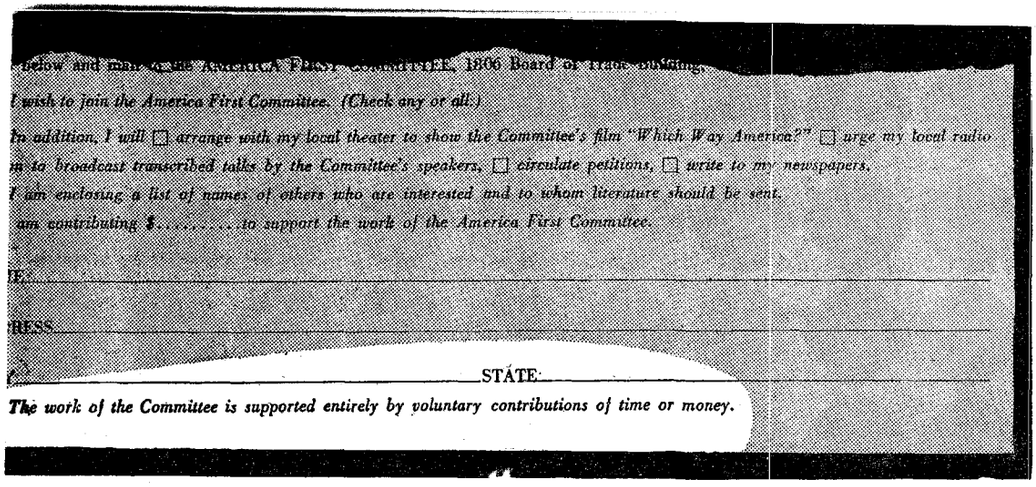
below and mail to the America First Committee, 1006 Board of Trade Building
wish to join the America First Committee. (Check any or all.)
In addition, I will ☐ arrange with my local theater to show the Committee's film "Which Way America?" ☐ urge my local radio
to broadcast transcribed talks by the Committee's speakers, ☐ circulate petitions, ☐ write to my newspapers.
I am enclosing a list of names of others who are interested and to whom literature should be sent.
am contributing $..... to support the work of the America First Committee.
E:
RESS
STATE
The work of the Committee is supported entirely by voluntary contributions of time or money.

THE AMERICA FIRST COMMITTEE *assures all contributors that its work is supported entirely by voluntary contributions of time or money. The Chicago office alone has a payroll of $42,000. The committee's director of organization told Spivak he'd appreciate it if Spivak "didn't mention the payroll" business.*

cooperated with Franco agents during the Spanish Civil War. Franco agents at that time, if not now, were pretty much synonymous with Nazi agents."

"Oh," said Moore. "I recollect the name."

I might have added that Hart's pro-fascist [illegible] not confined to crusading for [illegible] summer of 1937 he sponsored [illegible] rican Congress of Private Enterprise at which two of the chief speakers were the Rev. Gerald L. K. Smith, one of the country's most notorious anti-Semites and fascists, and Harold Lord Varney, former editor of an avowed fascist organ, Lawrence Dennis' *The Awakener*.

"You say there's no relationship between Hart and America First. Did Hart and Stuart ever communicate with one another?"

"I don't know. I'd have to ask Stuart."

"Do you mind?"

While I waited, the director of organization hopped in to see the youngster in charge of the national organization who had been told to keep his mouth shut. Moore returned in a few minutes smiling affably.

"I got the whole story," he announced. "Here it is: Stuart never had any communication with Hart. Once Hart called Stuart when Stuart was in the East. It was a day or two after the committee was announced by an ad in the New York *Times*. Hart asked for an appointment. Stuart knew nothing about him but had him come in. After talking with him, Stuart decided that they could not work together because Hart's views did not coincide with Stuart's or America First's. When Stuart returned to Chicago he wrote to Hart, telling him that they could not work together. Stuart never heard nor saw nor had any contact with him since. That covers it, doesn't it?"

"Only partly, I'm afraid. The letter you refer to is the one dated Sept. 30, 1940. Is that correct?"

"I guess so," he said, staring at me. "That would make his story accurate. Around the time America First was organized."

"That's right. Now that letter had a very important sentence in it. It did say that Stuart did not want Hart to start an America First Chapter in New York because Hart was labeled, but, and now I quote from Stuart's letter, 'It is imperative that we work together.' That's what I don't get. Why was it imperative that they work together secretly and not openly?"

"Is that what the letter said?"

"Yes. Here's a photostatic copy of it." Stuart's letter to Hart read:

"I have turned over in my mind the advisability of setting up a chapter of the America First Committee through your organization. Having discussed it with some members of the committee, I have come to the conclusion that it would be a mistake. The paramount objection is that your organization has been identified with a certain point of view and our chapter of the America First Committee would have a similar label attached to it. This, I believe, would be unfortunate.

"However, as I stressed to you, it is imperative that we work together on these things. I will let you know the name of the man who will be chairman of the New York chapter within a few days. I hope you will be able to work with him."

Moore read the letter carefully. "I don't know anything about it," he said. "All I know is that Stuart has had nothing to do with Hart or ever heard from him again. That's final."

"Is that what Stuart told you to tell me?"

"Yes."

"Let me read you a telegram Hart sent to Stuart:

" 'Came to Washington yesterday from New York to confer with certain persons about formation committee to oppose drift to war stop Castle and man you saw at Hay Adams Hotel told me of your group and it will probably be well for us to talk together stop I have call in for you and will be Mayflower Hotel two thirty standard time today Friday if I don't get you sooner stop Return New York this afternoon address there five ought five Fifth Ave. Believe prompt action urgent.'

"Now in view of Stuart's statement and the telegram showing that they had had other contacts than those Stuart is willing to admit, I'm wondering if there are any other individuals or organizations with whom America First might be working secretly——"

"We are not working secretly with anybody," Moore said slowly.

"This telegram I just read to you shows that a member of your national committee, who is reputed to be the 'brains' of the organization, met with an unidentified man in a Washington hotel, who then met with a prominent pro-fascist who wired Stuart. Who is the unidentified man?"

"I don't know. I don't know anything about that telegram."

"Would you mind asking Stuart?"

"Stuart's gone for the day," he announced. Moore had not left the office since the last time he had hopped in to see the boy wonder. I therefore wondered how he knew that Stuart had left for the day, but assumed it was clairvoyance and didn't press the matter.

"Castle is known as an appeaser. Hart's reputation is also known—even to Stuart, you tell me. When such persons meet with unidentified individuals whose names aren't even mentioned in telegrams, it's subject to suspicion, isn't it?"

Moore didn't answer.

"Stuart was willing to work secretly with a known pro-fascist. Would it be unfair to assume that this mysterious individual might——"

"I don't know anything about that," Moore interrupted. "Nothing."

"I see. How did Stuart meet Castle in the first place?"

"Oh, Castle was a natural. When Stuart heard he sympathized with America First principles——"

"Who told him?"

"Sterling Morton, I think."

"Sterling Morton, who supported Jung, introduced Stuart to Castle, and Castle is in close touch with Merwin K. Hart, a native fascist——"

"Say," interrupted Moore, "why don't we forget about that?"

"I'm afraid," I said getting up, "that's a bit too important to forget.

I DECIDED to see Castle and find out what light he could shed on these behind-the-scenes machinations. William R. Castle, Undersecretary of State under Hoover, who is reported to be a close adviser of both Lindbergh and Hoover, was not at his Washington home. He had gone to Hot Springs, Va., for his health. When I arrived at Hot Springs, I phoned for an appointment. Mrs. Castle was not at all certain that Mr. Castle would be able to see me; he had been ill for some time. But Castle himself finally agreed. We met in the spacious lobby of The Homestead and walked leisurely to a secluded corner on the enormous porch facing the mountains surrounding the hotel. The signs of his illness were apparent in his voice and walk.

"I wanted to talk with you about some aspects of America First policy," I said, when we were seated. "As you know the committee is widely reputed to be——"

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"Pro-Nazi," he murmured without letting me finish my sentence.

"Yes. Pro-Nazi and anti-Semitic. Now you are a member of the national committee and generally reputed to be the 'brains'——"

Castle crossed his long legs and stared up at the mountains.

"That is one of the funniest things that ever happened," he said smoothly. "Calling me the 'brains' of America First is very funny. Actually I've had as little to do with deciding the policies of the organization as any of the members. I kept away from the organization for a long time, but finally, seeing that they were pursuing a policy which met with my approval, I agreed to become a member."

"When you say you approved their policies, do you mean appeasement?"

He thought carefully for a moment. "I think you can call me an appeaser," he said slowly, "if appeasement means settling a thing by diplomatic methods without going to war. If it can't, I might well be in favor of war."

"Do you think we can settle the Nazi problem by appeasement?"

I had asked permission to take notes to avoid misquotation and he chose his words carefully, pausing when he saw he was going too fast for my scribbling.

"If it is true," he said as if dictating a statement, "that the Germans, a little while ago, made an offer to England that they would let the British empire and the British navy alone and asked only that they be allowed to consolidate the Continent, I think it might have been a good thing to have made peace."

He saw me glance up. It didn't take a trained diplomat to read the thought that flashed across my mind: if the Nazis were permitted to consolidate the Continent, it would mean giving them time to prepare for a more intensive attack later to destroy Britain and the Soviet Union and then finally settle scores with the United States. Clearly Castle was advocating the kind of "peace" which Hitler himself desired.

"Could you tell me how you happened to become active in America First?" I asked.

"Oh, I talked it over several times with General Wood. He was down in Hot Springs and we discussed it here, too. I think that after that young Bobbie Stuart wrote to me. I kept away from it for a while, but when I saw the way they were going at it, I agreed to be a member of the national committee."

"Can you give me an idea of how America First operates—the setup?"

He had been staring at the mountains, but at this question he turned toward me. His eyes behind the tortoise shell glasses suddenly grew large and bright. It was characteristic, I noticed, that whenever I broached a dangerous aspect of America First, his eyes invariably became large and bright. This was followed by an "I don't know."

"I know very little about how the organization operates," he said. "All I know is that the principal office is in Chicago and that it has branches all over the country."

"Do you know whether it is incorporated?"

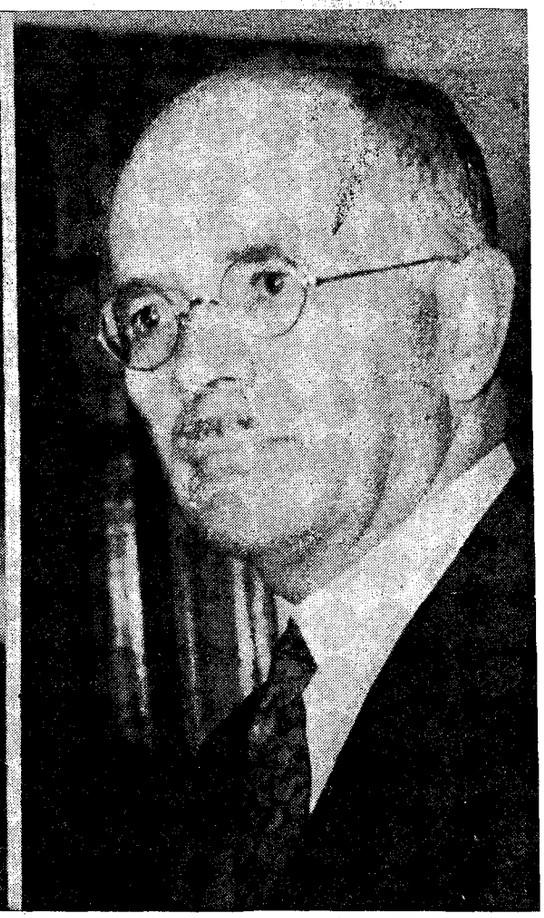
"No, I don't."

It was difficult to believe that a man who was Undersecretary of State, American ambassador to Japan, a diplomat of many years' training, whose personal business interests were farflung, would wait months before joining an organization in order to be sure that it was the right kind and then jump feet first without getting the most elementary information about it. But one of the things not done in talking with diplomats is to imply too clearly that you think the suave gentleman is not telling the truth, so I continued:

"Just what is the relationship between the various chapters and the national headquarters?"

"So far as I know, the national office keeps them supplied with material. They don't pay anything for it. They raise their own money and carry on much of their own work, too."

"Have you an idea of how much the national or the Washington office, for instance, has taken in?"



SENATOR BURTON K. WHEELER *and Lindbergh in a familiar salute. Wheeler's wife is a member of America First's national committee. He has openly espoused the committee's appeasement ideas. Last week rotten eggs were thrown at him while he was making a speech in his native state of Montana.*

STERLING MORTON *is one of America First's heavy financial contributors. He has also given money to the Vigilant Intelligence Federation, which has worked with secret Nazi agents.*

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"I wouldn't dare say how much. I don't know."

"Does the national office keep you, as a member of the national committee, informed of how much they take in and spend?"

"No," he said slowly.

"Are members of the national committee consulted on policies?"

"They have meetings periodically in Chicago and I assume that policies are decided then. I've never been to one of them so I wouldn't know."

"Just exactly who decides the policies?"

"I think they're decided at those meetings." He smiled and looked keenly at me. "I have no doubt, though, that General Wood influences them a lot."

Both of us chuckled. "I understand," I said. "Is the general membership consulted about these policies?"

He recrossed his long legs, took his glasses off and wiped them carefully, put them on again, and stared up at a tree on which a bird was singing at the top of its voice.

"I can't answer," he said slowly. "I don't know. I suppose not. They have a limited budget and it costs a lot of money to start taking the vote of a large membership."

"What is the budget?"

"I don't know."

"Well, what's the size of the membership?"

"I don't know."

"You know, of course, about the belief that there is a considerable amount of Nazi money coming in to America First for its propaganda. It's unfortunate, but the committee's refusal to make public its list of contributors of, let us say, $100 and up, has caused this belief to be even more widespread. Now, if the list of contributors were made public so the names could be checked, it would be the quickest way to scotch the rumors that Nazi money is helping the committee in its propaganda."

"I agree with you on that," he said quickly. "If Nazi money were coming in to the committee I would like to know it. I'd get out so quick they wouldn't even see me go."

"Have you ever seen the list of contributors?"

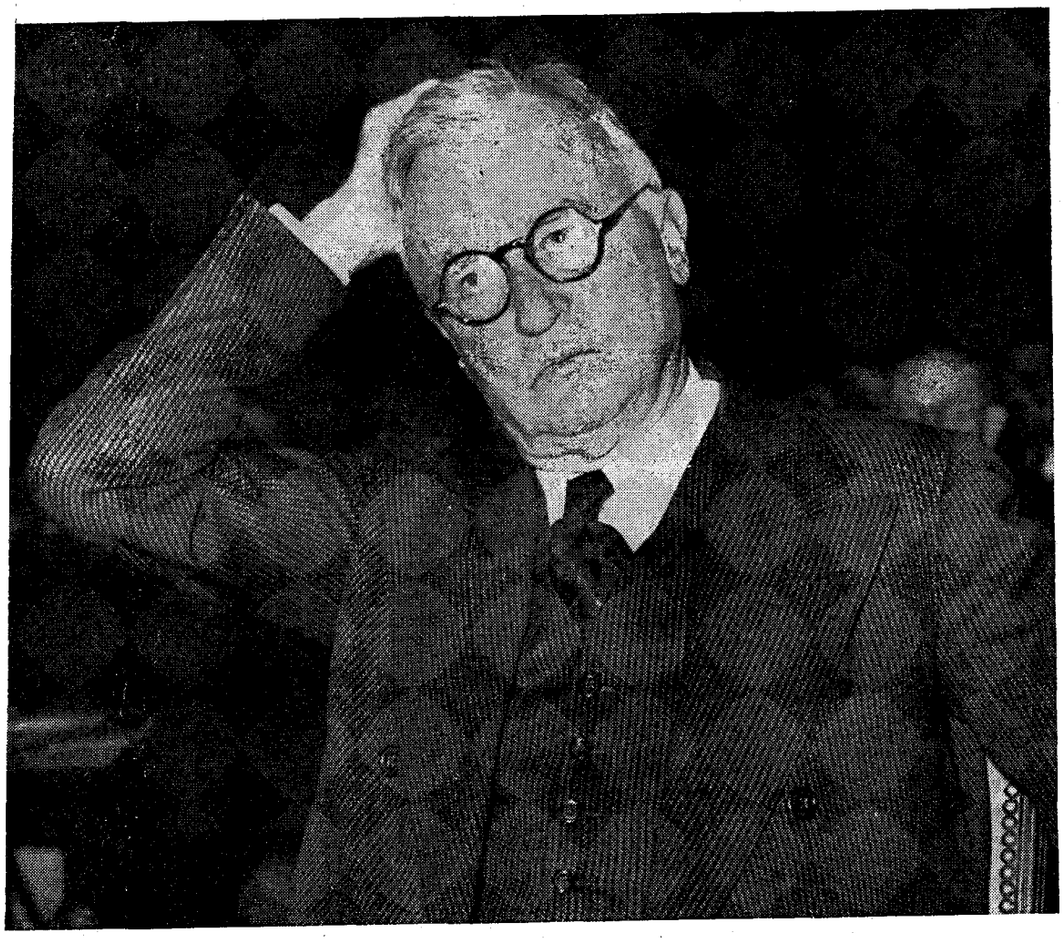
"No."

"Then how can you know that no Nazi money, directly or indirectly, is coming in?"

"I don't," he smiled. "But I know General Wood and the people behind the organization. I know that if they suspected any Nazi money they'd throw the contributor and his contribution out."

But knowing appeasers, I felt certain that the man who endorsed Hitler's "peace" plan would lose no sleep over the possibility of Nazi money financing the America First Committee.

"Are membership and financial statements sent to the national office from the various chapters?" I asked.



THE FORMER AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN, WILLIAM R. CASTLE. *His "embarrassing" letter appears on the opposite page. He and Herbert Hoover see eye to eye on how to play ball with Hitler.*

"I should suppose so but I don't know for sure."

"You're a member of the Washington, D. C., chapter, for instance. How big a staff have you got?"

"I don't know what it is now, but some months ago we had a paid stenographer and quite a number of volunteers."

"That brings up the question of the payroll. Are you supposed to have a payroll?"

Castle's eyes grew big and round and bright behind his glasses and he didn't answer.

"In all requests for contributions," I continued, "there is the definite statement that 'The work of the committee is supported entirely by voluntary contributions of time or money.' Now, if we drop 'or money' we find a definite assurance that money is received with the promise that it is to be used for almost anything, but not for a payroll. All work must be voluntary."

"I'm not a lawyer," he said slowly, "but it doesn't seem right to me. But that applies only to the national office," he added, "not to our Washington office."

"You are a member of the national committee, responsible for the national organization——"

"I'm not a lawyer," he said, his eyes very bright and round.

"The national office has a payroll of $42,000," I added.

"If it's as you say, it doesn't seem right. I wouldn't approve of collecting money with such assurances."

"In your own Washington chapter, has any check been made to be sure Nazis, pro-Nazis, and fascists were not giving considerable aid?"

"I wouldn't know if such persons were to offer aid, but we ourselves wouldn't have anything to do with pro-Nazis and fascists in our committee's work."

As soon as he said this, I knew exactly what question to ask next:

"Could you tell me how well you know Merwin K. Hart?"

The eyes behind the glasses got very big and bright and he held his head back with a haughty air.

"I have met the gentleman a few times," he said cautiously. "At small dinner parties," he added.

"You've been in communication with him?"

"Possibly," he said warily.

"It's one of your communications to him which tends to justify the widespread belief that the committee deals closely with pro-fascists, that some of its leaders are anti-Semitic and thus that the committee itself is anti-Semitic."

Castle didn't say anything.

"I'm referring to a letter you wrote to him on Dec. 28, 1940. In that letter you were discussing Verne Marshall, head of the No Foreign Wars Committee, and his explosive anti-Semitism. In talking about the Jews you wrote: 'God knows I have no particular affection for such people, but I should prefer to express it in private to you than in a public advertisement.' You recollect that letter?"

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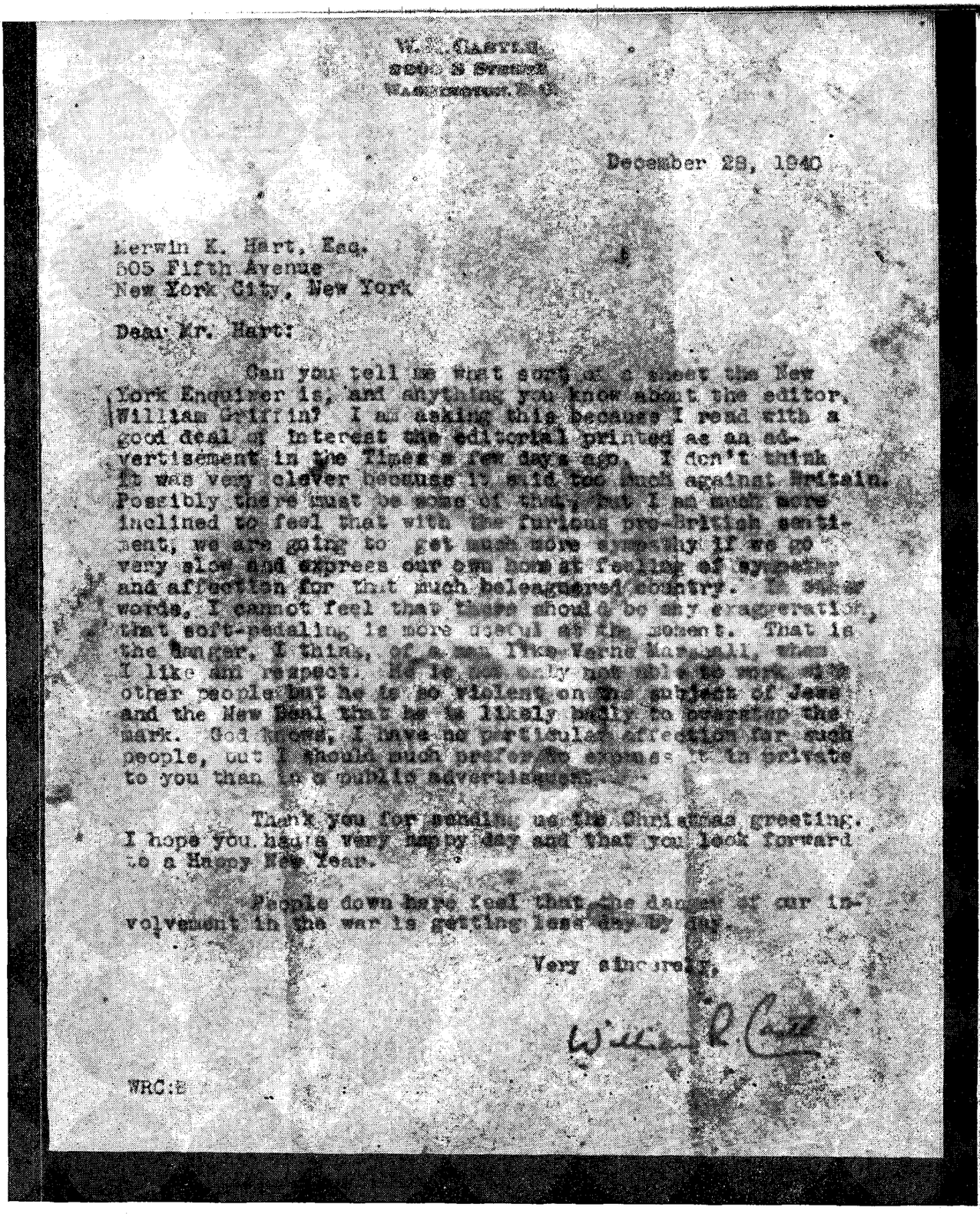

W. R. Castle
2020 S Street
Washington, D. C.

December 28, 1940

Merwin K. Hart, Esq.
505 Fifth Avenue
New York City, New York

Dear Mr. Hart:

Can you tell me what sort of a sheet the New York Enquirer is, and anything you know about the editor, William Griffin? I am asking this because I read with a good deal of interest the editorial printed as an advertisement in the Times a few days ago. I don't think it was very clever because it said too much against Britain. Possibly there must be some of that, but I am much more inclined to feel that with the furious pro-British sentiment, we are going to get much more sympathy if we go very slow and express our own honest feeling of sympathy and affection for that much beleaguered country. In other words, I cannot feel that there should be any exaggeration, that soft-pedaling is more useful at the moment. That is the danger, I think, of a man like Verne Marshall, whom I like and respect. He is not only not able to work with other people but he is so violent on the subject of Jews and the New Deal that he is likely badly to overstep the mark. God knows, I have no particular affection for such people, but I should much prefer to express it in private to you than in a public advertisement.

Thank you for sending me the Christmas greeting. I hope you have a very happy day and that you look forward to a Happy New Year.

People down here feel that the danger of our involvement in the war is getting less day by day.

Very sincerely,

William R. Castle

WRC:E

Diplomat Castle's Anti-Semitic Letter

William R. Castle, former Undersecretary of State during Herbert Hoover's administration, is a member of America First's national committee and chairman of the Washington, D. C., chapter. He is generally considered to be the "brains" of the committee. In a letter written from Washington on Dec. 28, 1940, to Merwin K. Hart, the notorious pro-fascist and friend of Franco, Castle explained that he does not like the Jews either. The text of this letter which Castle told John L. Spivak is "very embarrassing" is as follows: "Can you tell me what sort of sheet the New York *Enquirer* is, and anything you know about the editor, William Griffin? I am asking this because I read with a good deal of interest the editorial printed as an advertisement in the *Times* a few days ago. I don't think it was very clever because it said too much against Britain. Possibly there must be some of that, but I am much more inclined to feel that with the furious pro-British sentiment, we are going to get much more sympathy if we go very slow and express our own honest feeling of sympathy and affection for that much beleaguered country. In other words, I cannot feel that there should be any exaggeration, that soft-pedaling is more useful at the moment. That is the danger, I think, of a man like Verne Marshall, whom I like and respect. *He is not only not able to work with other people but he is so violent on the subject of Jews and the New Deal that he is likely badly to overstep the mark. God knows, I have no particular affection for such people, but I should much prefer to express it in private to you than in a public advertisement.* Thank you for sending me the Christmas greeting. I hope you have a very happy day and that you look forward to a Happy New Year. People down here feel that the danger of our involvement in the war is getting less day by day. Very sincerely, (signed) William R. Castle."

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Castle didn't answer immediately. He stared, motionless, at the trees on the mountain top and his voice almost purred when he finally spoke.

"That's a rotten thing, Mr. Spivak—stealing a person's private letters."

The silence that followed this statement was a bit heavy. The bird, hidden somewhere in a nearby tree, tried to split its throat in a new burst of song.

"I should say," he added, "that anyone who wants to play the game as the Nazis play it is just about as rotten as the Nazis themselves."

This moral outburst came rather strangely from the man who only a few minutes earlier had urged that America play the game as the Nazis play it and permit the saintly Adolph to be master of the world. For obvious reasons I was unable to reveal just how I had acquired a copy of this letter. So I was compelled to let Castle's insult go unchallenged. It was evident that the letter had hit him hard and we sat in an uncomfortable silence for a moment. Suddenly he turned to me with a friendly smile.

"That was an unfortunate letter, Mr. Spivak. It's very embarrassing."

"I feel sure you can explain it," I said helpfully.

"Yes. The explanation, as near as I can recollect it, is that someone wrote to me and suggested something about the committee. The question of Jews came up and I wrote saying that Jews should be represented on the committee the same as any other racial or religious group. Good heavens! It's absurd to say that I don't like Jews. Some of my best friends are Jews."

When with diplomats even a Spivak must be diplomatic, so I didn't point out that his letter, in which the "unfortunate" anti-Semitism appeared, had nothing to do with Jews being represented on the America First Committee. He was sufficiently embarrassed, so I dropped this particular aspect. At the end of the interview he asked that I submit my notes quoting him directly, so that there would be no misquotation. I agreed and he read the notes and inserted a few additions in a tiny handwriting. When I returned to New York, I wired him, calling his attention to the lack of clarity in his explanation of how he happened to write the letter to Hart, and asking for a clearer statement. Castle, however, had apparently had enough of putting things in writing about Jews and anti-Semitism; he didn't answer.

After he had announced that "some of my best friends are Jews," he repeatedly brought up the subject of anti-Semitism, insisting that neither he nor America First were either anti-Semitic or pro-Nazi.

"That was a very unfortunate letter," he repeated. "I scarcely know this man Hart. I've met him two or three times at small dinner parties."

"Have you had any contact with Hart other than these small dinner parties?"

"No," he said definitely.

"Hart sent a telegram to young Stuart about a meeting that you, Stuart, and a mysterious unidentified person had at the Hay Adams House——"

"Sent a telegram?" said Castle, his eyes big and bright behind his glasses.

"Yes. A telegram. I have it."

"I can't recollect any such meeting. I don't believe any such meeting occurred. I can't understand such a telegram."

"I see," I said, and silence again fell upon us. I expected another moral commentary, but Castle made none. Instead, after a moment's silence, he purred: "This man Hart. Altogether too damn many things are stolen from his files."

ANTI-SEMITE *Avery Brundage was dropped from America First's national committee, not because it is opposed to anti-Semitism but because it wanted to keep its skirts clear.*

"Yes," I agreed. "Quite a bit."

"M-m-m," said Mr. Castle, his jaw setting firmly. "It seems to me that this person Hart is entirely too careless."

"Quite careless," I agreed.

"There's an interesting point you raised before," said Castle. "You said he was notoriously pro-fascist. Ah, is there—is there any evidence of that?"

"Oh, yes. Among his choice activities was some intensive pro-Franco——"

"Ah, pro-Franco. M-m-m. Yes. But is there any evidence, Mr. Spivak, of his pro-Franco —ah, leanings?"

"He announced it in *Who's Who.*"

"Oh, my God!" he exclaimed.

"I brought up Hart only as an illustration of one of the reasons for the widespread reports that America First was dealing with pro-fascists, pro-Nazis, and was anti-Semitic."

"But Hart was never a member of our national committee," said Castle.

"That's true. But other persons reputed to be pro-Nazi and anti-Semitic were. For instance, what do you know about Avery Brundage?"

"Not a thing. Who is he?" he said quickly.

I explained briefly Brundage's background and told him that the national headquarters' spokesman had told me that Brundage had been dropped "because of his anti-Semitism."

"I'm not surprised they fired him," he smiled. "That would prove that the committee doesn't want pro-Nazis or anti-Semites on it."

"Or it might prove that when people began to talk about the committee's pro-Nazism and anti-Semitism, it wanted to get rid of the sore spots."

Castle shot a quick glance at me and laughed.

"Yes. It might prove that, too," he agreed.

"What about Henry Ford?"

"I have no idea how he got on the committee. We were not always very careful apparently. I didn't think Ford was pro-Nazi."

"Have you any idea why Lessing J. Rosenwald, a Jew, resigned?"

"I have my own idea, but it's not for quotation, so I don't suppose you want it. I do know that the committee felt very badly when he resigned. I felt badly personally. I know Rosenwald and like him. It's too bad."

"Were you, as a member of the national committee, consulted about dropping Brundage, Ford, or anyone else?"

"No, I wasn't."

"Were the other members of the national committee consulted?"

"I don't suppose they were. The executive committee in Chicago probably decided the matter."

"The point I'm driving at is that it seems the running of the America First Committee is in the hands of a few men in Chicago who appoint men to the national committee and drop them, apparently at their whim, without consulting even the other members of the national committee."

"If they do, they ought not to," he said, shaking his head disapprovingly.

Castle had looked at his wrist watch several times. This time he diplomatically stared at it until it was impossible for me not to notice it.

"I have to meet some people for tea," he said, rising and extending his hand.

We walked into the enormous lobby, neither of us saying anything. There was, of course, no one waiting to join him at tea. I walked him to the elevator and he returned to his rooms.* JOHN L. SPIVAK.

Next week John L. Spivak will present documentary evidence that the America First Committee is sending out notorious pro-Nazis and anti-Semites as official speakers. He will also shed light on other ramifications of America First, including the amount of money the organization has received from unidentified persons to carry on its activities.

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Dear Reader:

A Nazi super-spy, Fritz Duquesne, is on trial in New York today and the headlines tell how he filched secrets that involve the lives of thousands of our boys.

Do you know that NEW MASSES, seven years ago, in its issue of Oct. 2, 1934, warned America about this man? Do you know that John L. Spivak put his finger on Duquesne and wrote: "If the authorities are interested I shall be happy to give them his new name and address, and, when he moves, which he will do after he reads this article, his new address."

Well, Spivak is at it again. This time he has put "America First" under his microscope. When you finish looking at what he shows you, you will see more than the faint outline of the swastika.

We publish this series so that people will swing into action now, not seven years afterward, as in Duquesne's case. We want America to be on guard now, not to wait until a Nazi fleet is in New York harbor shelling Manhattan.

Spivak sounds the warning in this week's issue. Traitors are doing their dirty work. Millions of Americans need to be awakened. To this task, NEW MASSES is dedicated. We hope, we believe, you—our reader—are, too. If you are, then you will heed what we have to say now.

If America had the full truth, as it is told in this magazine, the entire country would be on the march against Hitlerism. We must therefore bring the truth to scores of thousands where today we talk to thousands.

How can we do that? The magazine strains every nerve merely to remain alive. We explained in our financial drive earlier this year that we must raise $25,000 for 1941 to meet our obligations. In that drive, however, we raised only $17,400. We said when we closed our drive that we should have to come again later this year to raise the absolutely necessary additional $7,600. That time is here.

Since we appealed to you last, costs of publishing have skyrocketed, as have costs in your personal life. We have come to the moment when all our bills must be met. The creditors threaten us. Therefore we come to you.

We want to continue giving you John L. Spivak's vital work; and Claude Cockburn's cables from London, Sholokhov's and Ehrenbourg's from the Eastern Front. We cannot do that without your immediate help. We cannot unless the existence of the magazine is made secure. It must stay alive.

If you agree with us, you will heed our call immediately.

The Editors.

(Please turn to page 30)

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AS BRITONS SEE AMERICA

Claude Cockburn polls British opinion of our defense effort. The aspirations of London's Lindberghs. What the man in the factory feels.

London (by cable).

YOU must be asking yourselves: "Are the violent criticisms of the United States now beginning to explode here and there in the British press genuine expressions of widely held opinion in Britain? If so, has there been some fundamental change in British attitude toward the United States? or—for we all have to be pretty suspicious these days—is the whole thing just a move in a propaganda game?" The answer to the first two questions is *yes*. To the third it is *no*, with the qualification that there obviously has been a decision made somewhere "high up" that it wouldn't do any harm just now to let America know a bit more about the not so polite side of what people here are thinking. It's easy to drool out page after page of vague stuff about the British attitude and the way it is. But maybe we can get at something hard and useful by sorting the varying attitudes of different important political and economic groups toward the United States.

Proceeding roughly from right to left—not, be it noted by any manner of means, in order of importance—we get a lineup as follows. Away off somewhere on the right of the line are mainly a silent group of personalities and elements whose motive fear is that the banking and export interests of the United S[illegible]s are muscling in dangerously on British [illegible]d power, using Britain's need as Amer[illegible]a's opportunity, etc., etc. I should say that these individuals are most numerous in the shipping business. It is characteristic of them that they conceive a world "after the war" which will be very much the same as the pre-war world. And they would like to spend a great deal of their time and energy, if the government would let them, in trying to keep their foot in the door of "postwar opportunity." In their own field they are the counterpart of those armament makers here who hesitate to build more plants for more tanks now because they are afraid that there will "be no market after the war." They live on about the same level of intelligence and patriotism as those in the United States who try to sabotage the main anti-Hitler effort with stories of Britain "muscling in" on South American markets with the aid of the lend-lease. They are worried not only about shipping business, South American business, and even Indian business, but also about American influence in Europe. Their fears in this respect became vocal, it will be recalled, in certain parliamentary criticisms of the Atlantic Charter a couple of weeks ago. Of course they are particularly susceptible to one sort of Goebbels propaganda. It would be absurd to attribute much power or influence to these people at this moment. Potentially, nevertheless, they are an element of danger in the common front of the peoples against Hitler. For of course these elements are just as alarmed about Soviet strength as they are about American strength. On the whole, they would have preferred history to come to a dead stop—around 1880.

Next we come to the opinion of another group which, until a few months ago, seemed to dominate the government. The notions of people in this category were fairly simple. They were fully reconciled to the idea of an "Anglo-Saxon partnership" in the world. They conceived a postwar world in which, with the help of the highly "respectable" puppets, Britain and the United States would "settle" the affairs of Europe and the colonial and semi-colonial countries by administering a fine old brew. This brew was to be compounded in more or less equal parts of the medicines not very successfully recommended last time by such practitioners as Marshal Foch, Woodrow Wilson, Herbert Hoover, Montagu Norman, and Owen D. Young.

Their views on more immediate matters were expressed by those of them who publicly indicated that in their opinion: (1) Hitler could not successfully invade Britain before American industrial aid had reached a decisive point; (2) by somewhere around 1943 or 1944 British forces backed by American industrial power would be in a position to invade Europe. That was the prospect as it seemed more or less officially presented to us all before June 22. It was based, when you came right down to it, on the calculation that there was quite a lot of time and that on the whole, short of some staggering disaster, time was on our side. And behind that calculation was another one openly expressed by Churchill in Parliament, months before the Hitler attack on Russia, when he said quite clearly that it was precisely the power and the policy of the Soviet Union which were preventing the whole forces of Hitler being thrown against the West. And it was just because of this "defensive" "time is on our side" calculation, that during that period these people thought we could afford to talk to the United States about as roughly and urgently as though we were sending out invitations to tea on the vicarage lawn the week after next.

Now, of course, it is true that there are still people in high places here whose views on these matters apparently remain unchanged, or whose complacency has even increased on the ground that "the Russians and Germans will exterminate one another," and the Anglo-American partnership will canter quietly home to an easy victory. Such people are to be found not only in government and official circles but, as I've already reported, in the ranks of the Trades Union Congress where they shouted "no" when they were told that if Russia fails, we fail. They, too, had in the back of their minds the notion that "Britain and America are invincible" and that America can always be relied upon to pick up the pieces of the opportunities which we let drop. And, of course, all those who do not want to admit that the Russians' fight is our fight, struggle against the popular demand for the formation of a second front now and have a vested interest in trying to deceive the people here about the degree of American aid that can be hoped for before it is too late.

But there were others, almost certainly a majority, who did realize that June 22 had changed everything. On the one hand, the terrific Soviet resistance presents a superb and unique opportunity for effective action—enormously greater "aid for Britain" than could have been hoped for from the United States for years. On the other hand, it became obvious that if that opportunity were lost then (if Hitler, for example, were allowed to get into a position to prevent a major Soviet counter-offensive for some months) the prospects for Britain would be unspeakably blacker than before. Simultaneously with any such success of Hitler, would come new moves by Japan with, again, black new dangers for the divided forces of Britain and the United States. It began to become clear week by week since then, that the urgency of the industrial effort that is needed to seize those opportunities and avert those terrible dangers is much greater, gigantically greater, than had been foreseen. Hence the fact of a notably growing anxiety and impatience in even the most staid "official circles" regarding the pace of the American industrial war effort.

Finally we come to the great body of the working class opinion about America. The British worker is more or less vividly aware that he has been somewhat misled about American aid. Sometimes he blames the fact on things the American authorities have themselves said, sometimes on the peptalks he has been given by the British political leaders. He doesn't think it matters a hell of a lot which of them were responsible. What he does think is that things being the way they are, it is about time all of them talked less and did more. He sympathizes profoundly with the troubles of the American worker in the great and grinding change-over from peace economy to the necessities of war economy. He has been through the same thing himself. He has seen and suffered all the hardships and the mistakes that are inseparable from such a changeover in our society. What angers him—and this is where the *Sunday Pictorial* editorial of ten days ago correctly expresses his feeling—is the tendency which he detects in all sorts of places to speak of American aid as though (1) it were anywhere within shouting distance of the Russian aid; (2) it were being provided either to the Soviet Union or to any other part of the common front on a scale and at a pace in the least commensurate with the demands of the situation. And in British working class circles there is a pretty widespread suspicion

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STALIN AS MILITARY STRATEGIST

It looked black on the Southern Front at Tsaritsin in 1918. Colonel T. tells what happened after Stalin got there. The man who wasn't hamstrung by the military manual.

IN MY article on "Soviet Military Leadership (NEW MASSES, September 16), I quoted Moltke the Elder's definition of strategy: "Strategy is the application of common sense in the work of leading an army; its teachings hardly go beyond the first requirements of common sense."

Now common sense is exactly what Stalin has got to a high degree. He has—and this permeates all his writings and speeches—an uncanny sense of the essential. When faced with a complex and involved problem, he cuts out the very heart of it and presents it to his listeners or readers—simple, stark, and solvable. This ability to separate at one glance the essential from the secondary, *plus* will power, *plus* singleness of purpose, *plus* the ability of the dialectician *"to carry through an originally conceived plan under a constantly shifting set of circumstances"* (Moltke's conception of a strategist)—all this makes up the equipment of Joseph Stalin as a strategist and military leader.

He well proved his worth and ability during six distinct campaigns of the Russian civil war of 1918-20. Of Stalin's activities during that period Voroshilov, now commander of the Northern Front, writes:

"In the period from 1918 to 1920 Comrade Stalin was probably the only person whom the Central Committee shifted from one front to another, choosing the danger spots, the places where the threat to the Revolution was most imminent. Comrade Stalin was never to be found where things were relatively quiet and safe. He always appeared at the points where, for a number of reasons, the Red Army suffered reverses, where the success of the counter-revolutionary forces threatened the very existence of Soviet power, the points where alarm and panic might at any moment develop into helplessness and catastrophe."

STALIN'S MILITARY CAREER began in June 1918, at Tsaritsin. As commissar of all food supply in South Russia he was sent there with a Red Army outfit and two armored cars. He found utter chaos at that important point on the Volga. Obstacles arising from the general situation interfered with the performance of his immediate duties. These obstacles were of a military nature. Stalin saw that, and simply took over the direction of military affairs because he understood that without such action he could not send food north. This decision of his was confirmed by the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic (*Revvoyensoviet*) in a telegram charging Stalin with the job of ". . . establishing order, consolidating the detachments, establishing a proper command, after discharging all those guilty of insubordination."

At this moment the remnants of the Ukrainian revolutionary army, led by Voroshilov, arrived at Tsaritsin, having retreated across the Don steppe under the onslaught of the Germans, harassed on the way by Cossack and other insurgents. Stalin became the head of all the military forces around Tsaritsin. The best testimonial to his work comes from a white officer, Colonel Nossovich, who served with the Red Army and then deserted to the White Army. He wrote in the White Guard paper *Donskaya Volia* Feb. 3, 1919:

"Stalin's chief commission was to furnish food supplies for the northern provinces, and in performing his task he received unlimited powers. . . . For Stalin the [military] situation spelled an end to his mission in the South. But it is apparently not in the rules for a man like Stalin to give up a job once he has undertaken it. Out of justice it must be admitted that any of the old administrators might well envy his energy, and his capacity to adapt himself to circumstances and the business in hand should serve as a precept to many. Gradually . . . as his direct task diminished, Stalin began to go into all phases of the city's administration and into the extensive work of defending Tsaritsin in particular, and the whole Caucasian so-called revolutionary front in general. . . ."

And further:

"The struggle on the front became extremely critical. . . . The prime mover and supreme authority from July 20 on was Stalin. . . ."

And again:

"The characteristic feature of this drive [to rid the military apparatus of traitors of all shades and hues—T.] was Stalin's attitude toward telegraphic orders from the center. When Trotsky, upset by the destruction of the leading organs of the region which he had taken such pains [pains indeed!—T.] to create, sent a telegram on the necessity of leaving the staff and the commissariat as they were and making it possible for them to work, Stalin wrote a categorical and significant superscript on this telegram: 'To be disregarded.' Thus the telegram was disregarded and the entire artillery staff and part of the General Staff remained under arrest on a barge near Tsaritsin."

In August the military situation at Tsaritsin became critical.

"The enemy front," writes Voroshilov, "shaped like a horseshoe with its two ends resting on the Volga, contracted from day to day. We had no way of retreat, but Stalin did not worry about this. He was filled with a single concern, with a single thought—to win and destroy the enemy at any cost. And Stalin's invincible will was transmitted to all his closest comrades-in-arms, and in spite of the almost hopeless situation, no one doubted we should win. And we did win. The enemy was crushed and flung back toward the Don."

At the end of 1918 events took a catastrophic turn on the northern wing of the Eastern Front of the Red Army. Its Third Army was forced to surrender Perm. Panic, disorganization of command and supply, desertions and treason of czarist officers in the commanding personnel were rampant. The enemy threatened Vyatka (now Kirov). The Central Committee decided to send a commission of two to investigate. Dzerzhinski and Stalin formed that commission. But Stalin decided to turn his investigation to the practical work of saving the front. In his first telegram to Moscow he does not even mention the causes of the catastrophe, but poses the problems of what must be done. In short, the result of Stalin's arrival on the Perm Front was that the latter took the offensive at the end of January 1919.

IN THE SPRING of 1919 the White Army of General Yudenich, with the help of White Estonians and White Finns (and supported by the British Fleet), began an offensive against Petrograd. The danger to the city was enhanced by counter-revolutionary plots, mutinies of misled troops (the forts of Krasnaya Gorka and Seraya Loshad went over to the enemy), and treason of military "specialists." The Seventh Red Army wavered.

The two mutinous forts had to be captured, but the naval "specialists" claimed that the capture of the forts from the sea went against science. And here we see Stalin pitting military common sense against military dogma. His telegram to Lenin after the capture of the forts is characteristic: "Following Krasnaya Gorka, Seraya Loshad has been captured. Guns on both forts are in perfect order, a rapid [here follows an undecipherable word] of all forts and strongholds is under way. The naval specialists assert that the taking of Krasnaya Gorka from the sea goes counter to all naval science. All I can do is weep for such so-called science. . . . I regard it as my duty to declare that in the future I shall continue to act in this manner, despite all my respect for science.—Stalin."

And six days later Stalin wired: "A change for the better has begun in our troops. . . . Yesterday our offensive began. . . ."

Petrograd had been saved in the nick of time by Stalin's energy, common sense, and

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magnificent disregard for military routine masquerading under the name of "science."

IN THE CRUCIAL FALL of 1919 the White Armies of General Denikin had reached a point some 130 miles south of Moscow. Tula was threatened. The Central Committee, as an heroic measure, appointed Stalin a member of the Revolutionary Council of the Southern Front. Here, Stalin the strategist showed his ability at its best. He was faced with Trotsky's decision to carry out the plan of striking at the White Armies from Tsaritsin to Novorossisk across the Don steppe. The claim, among other theoretical considerations, was that this was the shortest operative line. Stalin rejected that plan and explained why in a note to Lenin which deserves full quotation because it is so characteristic of his strategic thought:

"Two months ago the Commander-in-Chief [Trotsky] did not object in principle to an attack from West to East through the Donets Basin as the main attack. If, however, he did not undertake this attack it was, he maintained, merely because of the 'heritage' received as a result of the retreat of the Southern Army during the summer, namely, the haphazard disposition of the troops of the Southeastern Front, whose rearrangement would involve a huge waste of time, and this would be to Denikin's advantage. . . . But now the situation and the attendant disposition of forces has radically altered. The Eighth Army [the main army on the former Southern Front] has been transferred within the zone of the Southern Front and directly faces the Donets Basin; the cavalry corps of Budenny [the other main force] has also been transferred to the zone of the Southern Front, and another factor has been added—the Latvian division, which within a month, after it has recuperated, will again become a formidable threat to Denikin. . . . What induces the Commander-in-Chief [Headquarters] to persist in the old plan? Obviously only stubbornness, factionalism if you will, factionalism that is extremely pig-headed and dangerous to the Republic, factionalism nurtured in the Commander-in-Chief by the 'strategic' cocks-of-the-walk on his staff. . . .

"A few days ago the Commander-in-Chief gave Shorin orders to advance on Novorossisk over the Don steppe along a route which might indeed be convenient for our aviators to fly over, but which would be utterly unnegotiable for our infantry and artillery. It requires no proof to show that this absurd [proposed] advance through hostile territory, where there are absolutely no roads, threatens us with complete disaster. It is not hard to understand that this campaign against the Cossack villagers can, as recent practice demonstrated, only serve to antagonize the Cossacks toward us and make them rally around Denikin in defense of their villages. It can only make Denikin appear as the savior of the Don; it can only serve to raise a Cossack army for Denikin; that is to say, it can only serve to strengthen Denikin. It is therefore necessary right now, without losing time, to alter the old plan, already discarded by events, and replace it with the plan of launching the main attack on Rostov through Kharkov and the Donets Basin.

"First, in this case we shall be in nonhostile territory, we shall instead be in territory sympathetic to us [Here Stalin refers to the proletarian population of the industrial Donbas—T.], which circumstance will facilitate our advance. Second, we shall have in our hands an extremely important railway network [of the Donets Basin] and the main artery that supplies Denikin's army—the Voronezh-Rostov line. . . . Third, by this advance we shall cleave Denikin's army in two. One part, the volunteers, we shall leave to be devoured by Makhno, and the other, the Cossack army, we shall place under threat of an attack in the rear. Fourth, we shall be in a position to pit the Cossacks against Denikin, who, in case our advance is successful, will try to transfer the Cossack detachments to the west, and this the majority of the Cossacks will not agree to. . . . Fifth, we shall get coal and Denikin will be deprived of coal. There can be no delay in accepting this plan. . . . Briefly: the old plan which has already been discarded by life should under no circumstances be revived—this would be dangerous to the Republic and would be sure to improve Denikin's situation. It must be replaced by a different plan. Circumstances and conditions are not only ripe for this, but imperatively dictate such a change . . . without this my work on the Southern Front will be pointless, criminal, and superfluous. It will give me the right, or rather, will oblige me, to go anywhere, even to the devil, rather than remain on the Southern Front.—Yours, Stalin."

There is nothing one can add to this masterpiece of simplicity and strategical analysis.

Stalin's plan was adopted and brilliantly executed. Budenny's Cavalry Corps, like a huge saber, cut through the White Armies along the line Voronezh-Rostov and reached the latter city on Jan. 8, 1920, thus completing the execution of the Stalin plan. (The Cavalry Corps had been augmented and transformed into the famous Cavalry Army in November.) Simultaneously the Fourteenth Red Army crashed through along the Kharkov direction, while the Twelfth attacked along the Kiev direction. At the same time the Tenth and Eleventh Armies under Kirov recaptured Tsaritsin, which had been taken by the Whites in the summer of 1919, and advanced upon the North Caucasus. By the end of February everything was over for the Whites in southeast Russia and they sought refuge in the Crimea. The success was due to Stalin's simply turning the main operative line of the Red Armies ninety degrees—from the Tsaritsin-Novorossisk to the Orel-Rostov line. There was genius in this simplicity.

AN EVENT mentioned above—the formation of Budenny's Cavalry Army—proved of immense importance in the forthcoming struggles against the White Poles and General Wrangel. It was the first attempt to combine a number of cavalry divisions into a Cavalry Army and to assign to it independent strategic tasks.

Trotsky, who had read nothing about such things in military textbooks, was dead set against the formation of such an army and fought vigorously against the whole idea. But the Military Council of the Republic received a wire requesting the formation of the army under a Military Council composed of Budenny, Voroshilov, and Shchadenko. The formation was sustained against the advice of Trotsky. Stalin's plan had won again. Once again he had demonstrated his freedom from military routine and his ability to apply common sense to strategy.

Stalin, as a member of the Military Council of the Southwestern Front during the Polish campaign of 1920, directed the brilliant operations of the Cavalry Army which all but won the war and would have done so if Trotsky and his "cocks-of-the-walk" in the General Staff had not thwarted it by their mistakes in forcing the march to the Vistula.

In August 1920, when General Wrangel sallied forth from the Crimea and threatened the Donbas and the entire South, Stalin was charged with organizing a separate front against Wrangel. He did and only illness relieved him of his work.

SUCH are the salient points and features of Stalin's work as a strategist during the civil war. There was really not one single success to which he did not contribute. The study of his military career is of the greatest importance at this moment. It makes one feel that the destinies of the armed forces of the USSR are in firm and experienced hands.

COLONEL T.

★

Cockburn

(Continued from page 17)

that because this is now a peoples' war and because we all now are in a common fight alongside the Soviets, there must be powerful influences in the United States, as there are on a lesser scale in Britain, which would delay, weaken, and sabotage production for the common front. With his eyes now fixed on the battle in the East, and on the possibilities of direct action by himself and his mates against Hitler in the West, he is inclined to think a very great deal less about the United States, good or bad, than at any time in the course of this war. When he does think about them, he hopes that the people in the United States who do understand what this is all about will themselves "get a move on," that somebody will somehow give Lindbergh the same treatment he would get if he went to London or Moscow, and that the saboteurs and the cynical reactionary calculators will not be allowed to get away with it.

CLAUDE COCKBURN.

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THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE HOME

That is, Barbara Giles writes, if you have a home. What's wrong with housing in America. The defense workers hunt for shelter. Why rents skyrocket. What is the government doing?

MAYBE you're not moving on October 1; maybe you don't have a rent problem. If so you're lucky, but not for long. Only on Park Avenue and such are rents not rising (some have come down—from $1,000 to $500 a month). Elsewhere they go up, highest for those who can't pay. The table of statistics on page 21 tells you the story more graphically than I can. But that's just the first chapter, and what's to come I should hate to have to predict. Still—the tale *may* end happily; or it may, at least, lead to a happier Volume II titled something like *Good Housing by Mass Production.* That, however, depends on a number of things, chiefly: (1) intelligent administration of defense housing, and (2) just as intelligent correlation of that program with civilian shelter.

But before we arrive at heaven, let's look at what is going on here below. First of all, America is short on homes, even counting in all the four-wall affairs chiefly distinguishable from privies by the rent that's paid on them. The shortage has been tightening on us for a long time, and calling it a "defense shortage" is no excuse. Outside of defense areas the rents are rising too, along with the whole cost of living. However, with priorities beginning to nibble at civilian construction, and available government housing funds going into defense needs first, the shortage in non-defense dwelling units does become more acute. And there's certainly a shortage—a stupendous one—where shelter for the defense workers themselves is concerned. Indeed, the situation in this respect is a scandalous revelation of the building industry's inability to do its job. Defense housing is not only urgently, immediately important in itself; in broader terms it reflects the past, present, and possible future of America's entire housing problem. It also contains clues to potential solutions. For this reason, as well as for the sake of national security, it's well to begin a survey of the housing situation with a good look at what's happening to it under the defense program.

ON THE SURFACE you will see no indication of clues to any sort of solution. You will find nothing but chaos, with appalling consequences for the workers and defense itself. Along the Gulf Coast in Texas, trailers and tents make the defense areas look like tourist camps. The Joads, traveling now toward jobs in defense factories, will continue to sleep in their jalopies. In Kearny, N. J., some 8,000 new workers will probably be provided with 700 dwelling units. Negroes who poured into Buffalo by the hundreds for work in defense mills and factories found no place to live, simply none at all. There are "no vacant dwellings available for Negroes in the Buffalo area," according to the magazine *Defense* (July 29), although 200 such homes are finally being constructed. In Bath, Me., and Quincy, Mass., some skilled shipyard workers have left defense jobs for work in other communities where finding a place to sleep is not a fulltime job.

Of course the most notorious example of defense overcrowding is the capital itself, where Charles F. Palmer, coordinator of Defense Housing, can view the home shortage firsthand by strolling a few blocks from his office. He will find residences just about to explode with government workers who trample on each other's corns in the rush for the morning bath and are grateful for a cot in a basement room at five dollars and up a week. It wouldn't hurt Mr. Palmer to get a little personal experience with the housing problem. Perhaps it would diminish his complacency about the achievements of his Division, which has, during the past thirteen months, provided 17,561 dwelling units, or just about one-fortieth of estimated needs up to July 1942.

Mr. Palmer, as most people know by now, is a housing coordinator who doesn't care much for government housing projects. A realtor himself, he would prefer to leave the whole business to private industry—which is what he has done, as far as possible, with defense housing. In the June 17 issue of *Defense,* the cooordinator estimates that 525,000 new units will be needed in defense areas by July 1942, of which "probably 125,000 should be built with government funds, leaving 400,000 to be supplied by private industry." Last November he assured the Metropolitan Housing Council of Chicago that he had "no desire to create a future ghost town by building new homes for all the workers [on a Chicago defense project] *or for any of them* if it can be avoided." (My italics.)

"Future ghost towns"—that is the specter of realtors. Rather force the workers to commute, ride miles on the trolley, or walk to work; let them live in smelly little rooms, separated from their wives and children, or doubling up with other families. Anything to make sure that after the war the land won't be disfigured by an array of For Rent houses. If Mr. Palmer's friends cannot "avoid" building shelters, they lean to demountable dormitories and other temporary devices. There is no place like home that can be knocked to pieces in no time.

BUT there are other specters for realtors, and for banks, insurance companies, and private builders. One is a sufficient supply of housing to pull the rents down. They are highest, naturally, in the defense areas where the demand is greatest. How much more profitable to collect larger sums on the old houses that exist than to build new ones at a lower return per unit. Besides it "doesn't pay" to erect homes for people with working class incomes. Private industry, as a matter of fact, is not even capable of producing low-cost housing at any sort of profit. And here enters the biggest specter of all: "socialism" in housing—or rather, at present, "government competition," which the industry regards as a sort of Kerensky stage. For the government *can* build low-cost housing, and has done it during the last several years. Limited as its projects have been in proportion to needs, they have terrified the private builder by their demonstration of his own inadequacy. One of the first things Mr. Palmer did upon assuming office was to send out the glad word through the press that government would not "compete"—it would build only where the industry left off. To judge from the defense workers' plight, industry hasn't even started.

With such a viewpoint Mr. Palmer naturally isn't pressing for more funds to build defense homes. Thus far the appropriations made by Congress would permit the erection of 107,000 units—as against the total 625,000 needed by next July. These funds are for *all* public housing, although nearly all of the money is now being diverted to defense homes. But nothing like the 107,000 units are being constructed right now; only 78,000 have been ordered and less than one-fourth of those completed. Meanwhile, government housing for civilians is slowing down to a standstill.

A SITUATION as preposterous as this can't be cleared up by labeling Mr. Palmer "bottleneck" and throwing him out the window—though it would help. Essentially the civilian housing story is just as preposterous and for the same reasons. Private construction of housing is a luxury, craft business which caters to those who can afford the price—people with incomes of $5,000 or more a year, which means the top eight percent of the population. The industry is weighted down with a confusion of vested interests, financial complications, real estate problems, with a multitude of subcontractors and jobbers, with individualism and muscle bound traditions. In technique and productive achievements it falls well below the country's level of capitalist development as a whole. In 1939, a "good" year, just 475,000 dwelling units were built (including government construction) although the shortage called for 800,000 annually over a period of three or four years. As in defense housing the lack is hardest on workers (it "doesn't pay" to clear slums either), hundreds of whom, like the unemployed, must fight the vermin for space in a tenement.

But are the "middling poor" and the middle class itself so comfortable? No—even if the government brought down all the tenements (which it has scarcely touched), we wouldn't be halfway to heaven. Take rents, for example.

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Experts agree that no more than one-fifth of the family income should go for shelter. With an income of $1,500 a year this would mean twenty-five dollars a month; with $2,000 it would be about thirty-three dollars; and with $3,000, fifty dollars a month. The sort of house or apartment that an average family of five can get for fifty dollars in an average city is definitely no bargain; for twenty-five or thirty-three dollars it approaches the tenement class. This gives the family a choice: it can cut down on food, clothing, or other essentials; or it can cramp itself into a living space for which "home" is a euphemism. (For the very poorest there's no choice involved; those with "incomes" of less than $500 must pay twenty-nine percent for rent.) In the lower middle income groups, the majority cannot afford even the permissible one-fifth for their shelter.

And such shelter! The private bath, that famous criterion of American living standards, is not to be found in 80.4 percent of North Dakota's dwelling units, according to 1940 Census reports. In the rural areas of Wyoming 83.9 percent of the homes lack running water and sixty-nine percent have no electric lights. (I mention these states not because they are exceptional but because they are among the very few reported on so far by the Census.) Now we can hardly assume that 80.4 percent of North Dakota's families fall within the "slum" classification. For one thing, the Census report states that overcrowding, an inevitable feature of slum dwelling, exists in only 16.3 percent of all the state's housing units. A good proportion of these families quite likely drive inexpensive cars, wear ordinarily good clothes, and eat three meals a day. It is the building industry—second in size only to agriculture—which has failed more drastically than any other industry to supply their needs.

A structure with a penthouse top and a tenement foundation separated by tiers of mediocre or downright bad housing—this would roughly represent the picture of residential building in America today. We must have slum clearance—its importance can't be exaggerated—but we must also have better houses. Only 6.3 percent of the population lives in multiple-family buildings. The others, except for a lucky handful of wealthy, dwell in houses that are substandard in construction and equipment, and often dangerous (thirty-four percent of all accidental deaths occur in the home). And we must have *more* homes. Don't be reassured by the Census report of a five percent vacancy in the nation's dwelling units; most likely "vacant" means something you can't afford. Not only does the problem deepen as the population increases—families are becoming smaller and therefore more numerous in proportion to the population, which means that an ever greater number of dwelling units are required. Nothing short of some form of mass production of homes will really solve the housing problem.

Which brings us back to defense housing and the clues therein. Despite all the bungling, the government has built defense housing projects superior to and certainly cheaper than the homes put up by private industry. More important, it is now experimenting with prefabricated homes. Never mind the jokes about "mail order houses" and "cardboard cutouts." Prefabrication contrary to a rather widespread notion, does *not* mean temporary houses. It can in fact mean not only permanent houses but better planned, better constructed, more scientific, and more varied housing. Its potentialities have never been really tested. Experiments in prefabrication have been conducted by small entrepreneurs who lack the capital for anything like mass production and who are forced by transportation charges to confine their sales to a very limited area. To supply America with adequate housing, prefabrication would need to become a national industry with interlocking factories located at strategic geographical and industrial areas, connected by the industry's own transportation facilities. It's a far from simple proposition—indeed, the problem of financing only is staggering. However, the possibilities are immense. Think, for example, what an industry of this kind would do for employment alone. In defense housing we have an opportunity and duty to give prefabrication a real test, at the same time meeting the all-important housing needs of defense workers. The parallel duty is to utilize the project not only as an emergency measure but a potential of decent, attractive shelter available to the ill-housed millions of America.

BARBARA GILES.

Where Rents Have Soared

AT THE request of the Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply, the WPA Division of Research conducted a rent survey in fifty-eight communities. The results of this investigation show startling increases for more than thirty percent of the rental dwellings. In half of the places surveyed, the average increases amounted to more than twenty percent of the rent paid in March 1940. The rent increases, according to Howard O. Hunter, commissioner of Works Projects, "are hardest, moreover, on the families who are least able to pay, because in most instances the increases have been relatively greater on the poorer and cheaper dwellings."

This table indicates rental changes in several of the communities surveyed:

Area surveyed	*Date of survey*	*Average rent, March 1940, all units*	*Average increase for units having increase*	
			Amount	*Percent*
Anniston, Ala.	June, '41	$13.10	$3.60	28
Sheffield, Ala.	June, '41	12.60	5.10	40
Monterey, Calif.	June, '41	20.60	4.60	23
Salinas, Calif.	June, '41	31.10	4.50	15
Bristol, Conn.	May, '41	25.80	3.80	15
Groton, Conn.	May, '41	28.00	4.70	17
New London, Conn.	May, '41	26.60	3.40	13
Gainesville, Fla.	May, '41	19.20	5.00	26
Starke, Fla.	May, '41	13.00	13.20	101
Joliet, Ill.	May, '41	25.80	5.40	21
LaPorte, Ind.	June, '41	24.60	5.80	24
Madison, Ind.	July, '41	12.10	3.80	31
Burlington, Ia.	May, '41	20.20	6.60	33
Junction City, Kan.	June, '41	18.30	5.40	30
Leesville, La.	June, '41	11.60	12.70	109
Bath, Me.	March, '41	20.50	3.90	19
Elkton, Md.	June, '41	19.90	3.60	18
Bay City, Mich.	June, '41	22.30	4.20	19
Muskegon, Mich.	May, '41	21.50	3.80	18
Rolla, Mo.	June, '41	19.70	6.10	31
Farmingdale, N. Y.	May, '41	13.50	4.10	12
Elmira, N. Y.	May, '41	23.70	3.50	15
Massena, N. Y.	May, '41	22.80	4.30	19
Wilmington, N. C.	May, '41	15.20	4.80	31
Warren, Ohio	May, '41	29.20	5.50	19
Ravenna, Ohio	May, '41	21.00	4.80	23
Newport, R. I.	June, '41	30.00	4.30	14
Tullahoma, Tenn.	July, '41	13.30	9.20	69
Abilene, Tex.	June, '41	20.30	5.70	28
Brownwood, Tex.	June, '41	15.20	9.70	64
Ogden, Utah	May, '41	23.20	3.60	15
Windsor, Vt.	June, '41	20.80	4.00	19
Radford, Va.	May, '41	15.80	7.00	44
Morgantown, W. Va.	May, '41	21.50	6.60	31
Manitowoc, Wis.	May, '41	24.30	3.90	16

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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Free Him Now

FREE Earl Browder as "a great weapon of morality and justice in the struggle against Hitler." Free him as "a living symbol of anti-fascism." The first demand comes from the AFL District Painters Council of Cleveland; the second from the executive board of the International Workers Order. They are just two instances of a spreading, eloquent protest against the deliberately unjust imprisonment of a man known to the people as a general in America's democratic battles. During the past several days only, this protest was joined by dozens of trade unionists—eighteen labor officials in Los Angeles alone. It has been heard from Latin American countries, from across the ocean. On Monday evening, September 29, New York's Madison Square Garden will be the scene of a huge rally sponsored by the Citizens Committee to Free Earl Browder. Tom Mooney, the committee's chairman, will speak by telephone from his hospital bed in San Francisco, and other speakers will include Warren K. Billings, Arturo Giovanniti, Dr. Max Yergan, Rep. Vito Marcantonio, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. Mooney knows especially well the injustice of political persecution—and knows too the potency of mass demand, which finally brought him out of San Quentin's fortress. It has only recently won Sam Darcy, framed on an election technicality, a five-year probation instead of a prison sentence. It must and will free Earl Browder: America needs him—*now*—as never before.

Time Isn't Cheap

THE House Banking and Currency Committee has plenty of time. The cost of living climbs steadily, but the committee isn't worried. The nation's defense effort is threatened by inflation, but that's no reason to hurry about reporting a price control bill. The other day a member of the committee, Representative Kopplemann of Connecticut, suggested that it step on the gas and conclude hearings on price control legislation in two weeks because of the threat to consumers in rising costs. But Chairman Steagall said that would be unfair to the other committee members. Obviously, they're far more important than the nation's consumers.

Leon Henderson, federal price administrator, testified that in the past year basic commodity prices have risen seventeen percent, and foodstuffs, twenty-four percent. Every housewife knows what that means in dollars and cents. The testimony of Bernard Baruch confirmed the urgency of the situation. Baruch, who was chairman of the War Industries Board during the last war, emphasized the disastrous effects of inflation on the common man and warned against the postwar consequences if prices are not checked. And this big business leader gave a sharp rebuff to the business-as-usual philosophy so cherished by the dollar-a-year boys, when he said: "Full mobilization means transforming American industry from a highly competitive economy to a practically single unitary system under which all producers will cooperate, sharing trade secrets, pooling patents, resources, and facilities." Baruch will probably not concede that only socialism can achieve this in the full sense. In our own country we must make certain that the development he proposes does not squeeze little business to the wall and convert the entire economy into a series of huge Wall Street trusts.

On one point we must sharply disagree with Baruch: the inclusion of wages among the prices over which he proposes to place a ceiling. His argument implies that every American worker is receiving an adequate wage. But the majority of workers have incomes considerably below a decent standard of living. It is monopoly prices and profits that need to be curbed in order to strengthen America's fight against Hitlerism. One of the virtues of the administration price control bill, which the Banking and Currency Committee is sitting on so diligently, is that it specifically exempts wages. What is needed now is a little verbal dynamite from back home to blast the bill out of committee.

The New York Primaries

ANTI-FASCIST unity scored significantly and appeasement took a beating in the New York primaries. A most encouraging development was the victory of the Progressive Committee to Rebuild the American Labor Party in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens. In Manhattan, where the progressives have been in control, their victory over the right-wing candidates had been expected. In Brooklyn and Queens, however, the progressives fought an uphill battle to wrest control of the County Committees from the Old Guard. The outcome in the Bronx, where the right-wingers have been dominant, is still in doubt as we go to press. In Richmond the progressive candidates were not contested. The primary results thus constitute a rebuke to the Old Guard leaders who rejected the proposals of the progressives to unite the ALP on a smash Hitler program.

In the Republican primaries Mayor La Guardia, supporter of President Roosevelt's foreign policy, defeated the appeasement candidate, John R. Davies, by a 3 to 2 vote. That margin is nothing to crow about; undoubtedly the mayor's reluctance to deal with the war issue raised by Davies was in large part responsible for his failure to make a better showing.

Facing this issue clearly is all the more necessary in view of the fact that La Guardia's Tammany opponent, William F. O'Dwyer, has decided to cover up his appeasement support and his own pro-fascist sympathies (he once called Franco "the champion of democracy in Spain"), by giving lip-service to President Roosevelt's foreign policy. As Israel Amter, Communist candidate for mayor, put it in a radio speech: "Mr. O'Dwyer, fearing the anti-Nazi unity of the people of our city, is trying to hide behind President Roosevelt while receiving the embrace of the appeasers. The Christian Front, the Nazi Bund, and the Hearst press know their man O'Dwyer. So do we." It is up to New York's progressive forces to make the majority of the voters know their O'Dwyer too. For the November election is a most important national battlefront in the struggle against Hitlerism.

Aux Armes, Citoyens!

LIGHTS burn secretly in a Paris almost blacked out by the curfew of martial law. Not since 1789 have the marching lines of the "Marseillaise" been so applicable and so moving. With one exception: Hitler's "hireling host, a ruffian band," may "desolate" but they do not "affright the land" of France. There is the unrestrained savagery of fear in the Nazi and Petain measures against patriotic Frenchmen. Vichy threatens to shoot even more than the ten hostages now being murdered for every killing of a German officer. It dare not surrender the bodies of the thirty-six prisoners thus far murdered—it fears that the funerals would mean still more public demonstrations against fascist rule. Nazi military authorities, unable to shut out the sound of *"Aux armes, citoyens,"* search the citizens' homes for those arms. They sentence to years of hard labor anyone found guilty of democratic activities. The great Communist leader Gabriel Peri, former editor of *Humanite* and member of the French Chamber of Deputies, is reported to have received a life sentence. It is also reported that Raymond Guyot, secretary of the Young Communist League, has been put to death in reprisal for the people's rebellion.

But the people of France, united, oppose and thwart their killers at every turn. The authorities cannot apprehend the men who do away with Nazi officers—the patriots are too well protected by the whole populace. Peasants have joined the workers in sabotaging production; in the great, active "V" front of France are teachers, doctors, Frenchmen from every walk of life, including some members of the clergy. Frenchmen know they do not fight alone, they are part of a titanic worldwide resistance. In Norway, to name one sector, the "state of emergency" has caused the Nazis to extend their martial law from Oslo to the entire nation. To such a resistance—in France, in Norway, Belgium, all Nazi-ridden lands—we must give more than gratitude and admiration. Only real, practical assistance can hasten the *"jour de gloire"* not only for France but the whole world.

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RAUSCHNING'S "APOLOGIA"

Alibis by the author of "The Conservative Revolution." A real job of self-exposure. . . . Christina Stead reviews "The Battlers," the tale of Australia's dispossessed.

THE CONSERVATIVE REVOLUTION, *by Hermann Rauschning. Putnam. $2.75.*
MY NEW ORDER, *edited by Raoul de Roussy de Sales. Reynal & Hitchcock. $1.89.*

DR. RAUSCHNING'S first book, *The Revolution of Nihilism,* to which he owes the bulk of his prestige, was an attempt to explain Hitlerism; his second, *The Voice of Destruction,* was an attempt to explain Hitler; his latest, *The Conservative Revolution,* is an attempt to explain himself. To those who have followed Dr. Rauschning's work, and it is important chiefly for its influence on more important people, the sequence is natural. In the summer of 1931 he joined the Nazi movement in Danzig. As president of the Danzig Senate, he enjoyed Hitler's confidence, or at least intimacy, so that he knew definitely of such things as Goering's guilt in the Reichstag fire because he actually heard the fat assistant fuehrer boast about it in the lobby of the Reich Chancellery. Rauschning turned against the Nazis and resigned from the party in November 1934 over a clash with the local gauleiter against whom he tried unsuccessfully to appeal to Hitler. The chief strength of his writings on Nazism has been the unique self-exposure which he was able to witness from the inside; but he always enclosed the kernel of information in a shell of his own prejudices so that his reports of Hitler's opinions were at the same time a revelation of his own. In *The Revolution of Nihilism* Rauschning was a monarchist who placed his hope for a restoration in the army leaders. In *The Voice of Destruction* he devoted a surprisingly large portion of his space to attacks on the left. Always the question remained why he joined the Nazis in the first place and to what extent he still agreed with them. *The Conservative Revolution* is his answer.

Dr. Rauschning is frank. He tells us that he, in common with many other conservatives, had lost hope in the other parties of the right. They were completely out of touch with the people. They were losing ground in every election. The Hugenburg group of industrialists looked at every problem in terms of its own pocket and not even in behalf of its class as a whole. Dr. Rauschning was terribly disturbed. He was never a businessman, so that his immediate economic interests were not directly involved in his criticism of the existing capitalist leadership. He was distantly connected with most of the Junker land families in East Prussia. His father was a Prussian officer, but he devoted his early years to the study of music. Comparatively late in life he bought a medium sized farm of about 250 acres in the Danzig region and settled down to cattle breeding and intensive agriculture. He says that he was "forced into" agrarian politics "because there was no one else available who was able and willing to take up certain tasks." In any case, as he rose in Danzig politics, he went farther and farther away from the old parties of the right and found his way to the Nazis. In this respect Dr. Rauschning's case history is tremendously important. If they had not won over or bribed or browbeaten the more "respectable" reactionaries, such as he, the Nazis would never have come to power.

What was the attraction of Hitlerism in 1931 for the respectable, sensitive, dissatisfied Dr. Rauschning? What was their common ground? The answer is clearly given in *The Conservative Revolution,* and if the book has any value, it is this.

The traditional conservatives were afraid, some of them were sure, that the old order, their order, was dying. Their confidence in the old leaders was gone. Their thinking was saturated with the impending doom of their world. But they were not resigned to it. They searched around desperately for a way to put off the collapse. In the Nazis, at last, they thought they found the indispensable element of their salvation. So great was the crisis of the conservatives that they had even lost the necessary faith in their own capacity to rule. In the Nazis they recovered it. The mysterious element was "faith." Dr. Rauschning writes:

"We were attracted by an element that existed in Nazism and in no other German party. When one is compelled to venture into unfamiliar regions beyond the boundaries of ordinary routine, and to ignore the pretensions of the experts—and this happens at all times of great crises and changes—then the success of a great experiment depends above all on an immense faith and a vitality of far more than the normal temperature." He adds: "In historic crises the saving act comes always from the outsiders, the men who are regarded as fools. In this Nazism there was faith, a truly ungovernable and unmannerly faith in itself. That was the attractive element in it. That was the secret of its sex appeal, not only to the masses, but to the intellectuals, although the latter saw plainly the alarming and menacing elements in the movement."

What does this amount to? From these typical passages it is possible to see how far the old conservatives, the Hugenburgs, Papens, and Rauschnings, had lost faith in themselves, that they had to turn to the Nazis whom many of them secretly despised. This confirms in detail the Communist analysis that the capitalist class as a whole, in order to hold off its disaster, deliberately backed the Nazis.

The old rulers were ready to acknowledge their own emptiness and incapacity to rule. And why? This brings us to the key. Dr. Rauschning is clear again. The great force which he feared and hated above all was what he likes to call the "masses." All the troubles of his time, he thought, went back to the emergence of the masses as a political force. It was necessary to turn back the clock. But the traditional conservatives were hopelessly estranged from the masses. This was their fatal weakness. They did not have the organization or the imagination to overcome it. At first they distrusted and scoffed at the Nazis. Soon, however, they began to learn from them. This is what they learned: "We must try, we felt, to divide the masses. We must try to hold the masses in check through themselves. The masses could be tamed only by the masses. Political leadership could only be won and kept through the masses. The securing of a basis among the masses seemed to us to be the practical teaching of all political wisdom."

The Nazis, as Dr. Rauschning admits, were looked on by the conservatives as merely the means to deceive and hold the masses in check. Some conservatives joined the Nazis as a tem-

Sylvia Wald

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porary expedient. But not Dr. Rauschning. He wanted an injection of fresh blood in the old system. The fact that conservatism had become the monopoly of the propertied classes convinced him that a new start was necessary. It had to represent the propertyless classes too, otherwise it was bound to die. This demagogic idea needed a demagogic technique. The Nazis had it. Their lack of scruples and readiness to experiment were refreshing to a decadent conservative. Dr. Rauschning puts it this way: "If democracy is not to come to grief through its own parliamentary mechanism, the non-Socialist parties must have their own mass following; they must bring in the young by hook or crook."

Dr. Rauschning does not tell this miserable story in order to repent. Rather it is an *apologia pro vita sua.* He readily admits that he and his friends were mistaken in one thing. They thought that they could control the alliance with the Nazis, they could smooth out the rough edges and get rid of the worst offenders against taste and tradition. But this is as far as he is willing to go. He even doubts whether he should have resigned, whether it would not have been better to work for "the conservative revolution" inside the Nazi ranks than outside. He does not waver in his allegiance to his original intentions. To this extent his explanation of 1931 is his confession of 1941.

Nevertheless, there are many things about which Dr. Rauschning is far from clear. He tells us that he joined the Nazis to advance the cause of "reform." He also joined the Nazis out of a "sense of the necessity of re-Christianization." He believes that socialism is inevitable but he insists that private property and the profit system are eternal. Demagogy? Bad thinking? But he is guilty of even worse confusion. His hatred of the masses and their radicalism is so deep that he even translates his rejection of Nazism, such as it is, into a more basic opposition to the left. The trick is done by identifying Nazism with its opposite. He repeats tediously that Bolshevism and Nazism are the same. Indeed, Nazism is the last stage of Bolshevism. In fact, Marx is really responsible for Hitler's anti-Semitism. How? Because Marx used the bourgeois as Hitler uses the Jew. By this reasoning God is equally responsible, for one uses the devil as the other uses the Jew. It is very painful.

Dr. Rauschning's book is valuable for the insight its author provides into one of the basic factors in the Nazi success. This is not lessened by the fact that he did not mean to do so. But it is weakened by the fact that Dr. Rauschning has begun to repeat himself. There is hardly an idea in *The Conservative Revolution* which was not present in some form in the two previous books. Moreover, the title is misleading. Dr. Rauschning does not want any kind of a revolution. He merely wishes to avoid a conservative collapse and he is clever enough to see that conservatism cannot afford to narrow down its social basis to the extent of Germany's in the twenties. His conservatism is a revival and not a revolution.

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"MY NEW ORDER" is a collection of Hitler's speeches by Raoul de Roussy de Sales, former correspondent in the United States for *Paris Soir*. Its thousand pages cover Hitler's first efforts in Munich in 1922 to the proclamation of June 22, 1941, which opened the German-Soviet war. It is rather a pity that the section 1918-33 is only about a tenth of the whole, because those are the years which are least available in other books of reference. The editor has contributed several pages of comment to each of the sections but they do very little to clarify the text. His prejudice against the Soviet Union is so great that it has led him into the most ludicrous blunders. In one place, he has created a single "war front" of "Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, and Japan." This should be news to Hitler, Mussolini, and Japan. In another place he thinks that Hitler did not make any demands on Stalin because he "was too pressed by time." The idea did not even suggest itself to the author that Hitler had reason to know that he could not get any appeasement out of Stalin; he did not make any demands of that kind because he knew they were futile. *My New Order* is a companion volume to the same publisher's edition of *Mein Kampf;* the editors of both of them performed the incredible feat of making Adolph Hitler more complicated than in the original.

THEODORE DRAPER.

Wandering Workers

THE BATTLERS, *by Kylie Tennant. The Macmillan Co. $2.50.*

A CZARIST policeman once told the young casual laborer Maxim Gorky that he had discovered a secret. "There is a web covering Russia," said he. "The czar sits in the center and the threads stretch out to cover and reach even the least of Russians." But Gorky belonged to another web that the imperial watchdog knew nothing about.

The Battlers is a story of the dispossessed of eastern Australia, and this second kind of web is printed on the map of Australia by the soles of their feet. They know Australia better than any others; and they feel they are the true people of the land, they are its heart. So did Gorky's wanderers feel; Russians in Russia, without a country and yet the lifeblood of it. This Australian segment of the army of hunger, which bivouacs on the red plains, is recruited from the country unemployed, town rejects, the road-born, bankrupts of the great droughts, ousted farmers, drifters, the issue of prisons and reformatories, and even a few insane through want. They have no home but the track; this same track of theirs is a jail, a treadmill. They cannot move off it and they cannot live on it: they must just keep moving. If they stay on it and keep moving, they preserve their recognized status as bagmen (tramps) and dolecatchers, and are tolerated. Between the cyclone and the anti-rabbit fence, which protects the wheat and stock, the eternal wandering workers follow the track, motor road, sheep lane, sandy wheel-track, unprinted dust, north and south to the orchards and canneries, according to the season, or out into the far waterless west, for sheep shearing, wheat loading, or the rumor of a new-opened ore reef. They are not the suddenly unlanded farmers of *The Grapes of Wrath,* but Gorky's wanderers, the perpetually expelled and disinherited, who must walk till times change.

They are not looking forward to an Eldorado or a California of milk and honey. They have a precise idea of what awaits them; they have accommodated themselves to their forty years in the desert, and their traveling is in proper stages. It is calculated in days' journeys which will bring them to the next doletown on the next Thursday. They camp in tents, or under their carts on the fringes of desert villages, or green towns: mere human scum to the inhabitants, they are warned off the pastures and the grassy embankments of dams. They are only a kind of human locust to the resident unemployed, stripping the country of seasonal work and odd jobs. Therefore, any local political interest in favor of the unemployed makes haste to get "the battlers" out of the district.

They know their misery: they have constructed a class pride out of it. They have to battle for every bite and every drop that passes their lips. Battle means work, beg, borrow, or steal; it means, get by hook or by crook.

Each sundown is therefore a victory for every battler still alive. Boredom and desperation possess some of the women; some few of the men are rebels, some are confused and scatterbrained, a good many believe in the union. Most of the work they do is unionized, and done under industrial awards: it is a social crime to do scab labor (when it is to be had), if the union organizer has forbidden it. But the unions do not care for the particular needs of the bagmen and their talk of a bagmen's union (traveler's union). It is only the women who fancy their sorrows will be partly over when they settle down, "localize"; the men feel that the road is in their bones and the only work they can get is seasonal: the best they can do is to protect themselves as wanderers.

The dole is not enough to keep them in the coarse black tea they enjoy and they think it only fair that they should sometimes take a sheep or steal a few leaves from the corn stocks for their horses. On the track is no grass; sometimes not even a gaunt thistle or grey saltbush. They do no harm—they do not want to rouse the countryside and queer the pitch for the battlers who come after. They earn what they can, they beg what they can, they swap what they can. Stealing is a mere last resource, and yet they feel that something is owed to them; they do not ask much.

There is nothing wrong with them—they are not lazy, they have kin somewhere,

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they once had work and hopes, they still have hopes. Their fair hair is bleached, their lips cracked; they are scarecrows, they lack teeth and they have the desert eye diseases. They suffer from hunger. They must even battle for a drop of water in a country where it is not uncommon to see five years go by without a rain cloud in the sky. They stoop to the yellow puddles where dams once were, and beg to share with the grudging housewife the thick dregs in iron tanks.

The drama is great that lies behind the great canvas of this book. These people are the victims of an antique system which took over a vast continent with the simplehearted notion of sending chain gangs there to work in peonage for a few high caste land owners. That has changed because the exploitation of the land has become more efficient.

But it is still woefully out of date. Australia is a kind of czarist Siberia in the South Pacific, its first colonists recruited in the same way, from persons exiled for life for political agitation and the crimes of want. Every improvement made in the government of the country, as well as its advanced industrial unionism, has been gained through the great sufferings and struggle of the people. And the battlers are right in feeling that they are the real Australians. They are still fighting the fight that always had to be put up by those people. They are not self-satisfied like the city slugs or the land-swollen squatters (rich planters); they are longing and battling for the good day to come, in whatever way they can, when something even more than efficient unionization will give them food, water, land, and jobs. Only a radical change will do any good to a country of this sort. It is only a great change which will free the battlers from the prison of the road.

This is the great drama of the book. What is to be done? What is to be done is not conjectured here; but Mrs. Tennant has painted the picture as clear and moving as one of Steinlen's great cartoons. It is written in a harmonious, simple style of reportage. Against a vast landscape by no means dreary or depressing, for all its horrors, move a small "mob" of good companions, among them the toothless child Dancy, the Stray, let out of a reformatory, and Snow, a morose but goodhearted bagman, a good sheep stealer. Dancy, tough but affectionate and with girlish fears, becomes fond of Snow. Snow tries to shake her, but the track unites them. The language is in the true vernacular, not the imaginative Cockney which is spooned out in Sydney to foreigners. But for this reason the publishers should have provided a small glossary. Some of the passages might be confusing; for example, to "fake" means to work, to "knock up" means to fatigue, to "cruel" is to queer, or annoy. The word "battlers" probably comes from our early German settlers and originally meant "the beggars." This splendid double-meant title is symbolic of the book.

CHRISTINA STEAD.

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FARCE AND VIOLENCE

"The More the Merrier," Broadway's latest comedy, would have been better with less rough-house nonsense. . . . A new Soviet film, "General Suvorov," reconstructs the story of a people's hero.

THE business of writing farce comedy is one of the most difficult in the theater. For the farce demands—if it is to be successful—not only a sound dramatic structure, but that super-addition of comic content that makes "being funny" one of the most arduous of occupations. What seems, on the stage, spontaneous crackling humor—of situation, of character, of manners, of satire, of dialogue—is most often the result of intensive and deliberate contrivance, of ingeniously calculated timing and the clever juxtaposition of character and situation. Where comedy depends mostly on character—in its broadest definition—farce relies largely on situations that are not only ingenious and ludicrous, but ostensibly logical.

Frank Gabrielson and Irvin Pincus started off with an idea in their farce comedy *The More the Merrier.* The comedy idea was the humor to be extracted from a pompous and ambitious Colorado millionaire, who has political aspirations. (The portrait bears more than one resemblance to W.....m R.....h H.....t; a humorous character, you will admit.) At the rise of the curtain he is going slightly mad because his press agent, who is managing his campaign, is undergoing an emergency operation. There are many pointed cracks about the relationship of wealthy parasites to the body politic, and you get set for the authors to say something of more than comic moment.

From this point on the comedy degenerates into a farce that never comes off. If it *had* come off, the word *degenerates* would have been ill-advised. But it doesn't. The authors' humorous and satirical inspiration flags, and they have recourse to all the old tricks we have seen in rough-house farce since the first imaginary curtain rang up in the theater at Epidaurus. A substitute press agent arrives; he is expecting his writer-ex-wife (with whom he is still in love), and her female collaborator. The female collaborator turns out to be a male with amorous designs on the lady (which she reciprocates). All three are broke. Problem: how to get to Denver to help manage the tycoon's campaign?

Well, there are moments of genuinely insane comedy, most of them supplied by variegated minor madmen and women: a tourist who swipes souvenirs, a respectable-looking old gent who likes to draw mustaches on faces; a querulous old maid who hopes to catch a man in her room; assorted mysterious thugs; a corpse on roller skates. Like the corpse, the farce falls on its face, and only picks itself up at odd intervals.

Distinct credit must go to the man who plays the corpse: Jack Riano, an acrobat of no mean accomplishments. He executes a magnificent and terrifying backward dead-fall from a high balcony, that will live in the annals of the New York stage. Will Geer, in a minor part in the third act, is Will Geer without benefit of a character to get his teeth into. Keenan Wynn is a genuine comedian without benefit of his father's boring mannerisms. Teddy Hart is a clownish gangster who exploits his diminutive stature to no good purpose. Millard Mitchell has a funny face and a dry humor that is contagious. Miss Grace McDonald is a charming young girl from musical comedy, who walks like the dancer that she is. Doro Merande contributes her stylized old maid; she is very funny. Frank Albertson works hard, and these accomplished people momentarily succeed in getting the farce off its last legs. But only for a moment at a time.

WHERE *Arsenic and Old Lace,* under the hand of a devilishly clever writer, achieved real farce out of the impossible situations posed by two sweet-old-lady murderesses, *Cuckoos on the Hearth,* the concoction offered by Parker Fennelly, does its best to capitalize on *Arsenic and Old Lace,* and makes a ludicrous mess of it. Most amusing aspect of the play—which is farce comedy *cum* horror—is the bland admission in the program that it is liberally swiped from *Asenic, Our Town, The Tavern, The Man Who Came to Dinner,* not to mention *The Seven Keys to Baldpate.* There is a folksy commentator a la Frank Craven; a man made up to look and act like Alexander Woollcott; a lonely farmhouse on a howling winter night; an escaped homicidal maniac; unexpected guests. All of this is tied into a hero who is working on a secret poison gas; a bird-brained cousin whose life ambition is to do the hula; a house where the Hawaiian wife of an American sea captain died under mysterious circumstances.

N. P. CHERKASOV *as General Suvorov*

Some of this is funny; but not too much. After two acts the commentator announces that what has gone before only happened in the mind of Alexander Wool—I mean, the writer, who is writing a murder mystery. The third act then is supposed to show you how truth can be stranger than fiction. By this time, however, you don't much care, for you have figured out the identity of the homicidal maniac by the simple, classic method of deciding that the most innocent-appearing character is undoubtedly the culprit. He is.

Here again is an excellent cast of players set to the impossible task of resuscitating a play that is dying on its feet. They should be applauded: especially Janet Fox for her hula-ing old maid; Percy Kilbride for his convincing maniac; Howard Freeman, whose imitation of Alex Woollcott has such verisimilitude as to sicken the beholder; George Matthews for his highly credible dumb gangster. But Mr. Pemberton, who produced this thing, should have shown greater discernment; or hired the original Mr. Joseph Kesselring. (He wrote *Arsenic and Old Lace.*)

ALVAH BESSIE.

Military Epic

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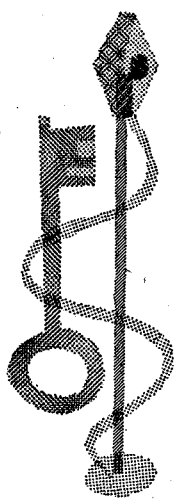
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reads today's headlines. Nowhere in the film is the parallel stated or obtrusively implied, but it is so inherent in the very material of the script, the historical fact, that no one can miss it. *General Suvorov* is a movie to excite and hearten the millions who feel themselves allies in the present-day "magnificent resistance" to another, more monstrous Conqueror.

Suvorov was an *enfant terrible* among generals of his time. He rebelled against the customary military uniforms—frilly, braided, sashed, coat-tailed affairs that made battlefields resemble a fancy-dress ball and impeded freedom of motion. He despised as much the foppish coiffures, the powder-puff effects and pigtails, the wigs that nested vermin. The sanctity of Military Regulations bored and irritated him. Above all things he hated the arrogance of the Imperial command toward rank and file soldiers, the attitude that these men were not men at all but creatures wielding guns, with just enough sense to hear and obey orders. Suvorov's heresies — and they were revolutionary—might have earned him exile if he had not had a shrewd empress, Catherine the Great, who relished the practical virtue of his ideas, particularly as they were expressed in the tremendous victories he won for her armies. She permitted him to effect some administrative reforms in the army and to abolish the worst of the fripperies.

The movie opens with a scene in Poland two years before Catherine's death. Suvorov's army has just captured an encampment from the enemy and, even while celebrating the victory, is planning to march on to nearby Warsaw. The great general, his coat off and his short locks blown by the breeze, addresses the troops collectively, then speaks individually to certain officers and soldiers, dressing one down for inefficiency, promoting another for heroism. In this scene the remarkable artistry of N. P. Cherkasov's acting is at once evident. What he does, actually, is to give a lesson in military tactics—but he projects such an impression of personality, of the human element in his thinking, that the whole scene is robbed of any flavor of a lecture and infused with the excitement of suspense. The arrival of an emissary with a message from another general gives Suvorov an opportunity for a finely sarcastic speech about Military Regulations which order a general to go *around* a forest instead of *through* it, thereby losing time and exposing his troops. Mobility, speed, suddenness: these are three major principles of the Suvorov strategy—the major principles of mechanized warfare today. And the fourth principle, the most important for Suvorov: "I do not *drive* my men into battle . . ." he tells the emissary. They follow him, and follow because they understand what he, and therefore they, are doing. This point, which is elaborated later in the scene that shows Suvorov dictating his famous maxims, is illustrated in the relationship between him and his soldiers. They follow him, yes—they look up to him as a leader. But the enthusiastic love for him is buoyed by a collective pride and confidence; it is always "our" victories, or "we" who will conquer.

At Catherine's death the "Mad Emperor" Paul becomes czar and Suvorov's rivals get their innings. Back come the lace ruffles, the wigs and vermin, the pompous posturing and goosestepping. Paul's flatterers feed his vanity and thereby feed on it, getting their reward in military promotions and noble titles. They tell their emperor the terrible truth about the famous General Suvorov—that he writes derisive verse concerning Paul's military intelligence, and (incredible!) promotes men from the ranks. Commanded to end his insubordination, Suvorov retires to the country with his loyal veterans and remains there until one day the emperor summons him to the palace to make a request. Napoleon is swaggering through Europe, advancing toward Russia. Will General Suvorov lend the glory of his military reputation to the struggle against France by taking command of the army? Yes, says the general, if he can command in his own way, treat his soldiers as persons and not as the "mechanism" (the emperor's own word) that the army has become. This the emperor refuses to allow and Suvorov rejects the command—a piece of insolence for which Paul virtually exiles him. He is finally brought back, at the insistence of Russia's English and Austrian allies, to lead the troops against Napoleon in Italy.

AND he leads them to victory—through fearful exploits up the Alps at night; against spies and defeatists in his own War Council; despite blunders by the Austrian command which leave him stranded on the Alps, surrounded by the French, his army of veteran "old men" worn out and starving. Even when he has managed to get his men down a terrific precipice to the dreaded Death Bridge, he nearly loses the battle, for the French blow up the bridge. It is then, for the first time, that Suvorov finds a use for the fancy czarist uniforms—he commands the officers to take off their sashes and lash together the logs of a demolished hut to make another bridge. The soldiers cross in triumph.

There's the story, but it's only half the film. The other half is in the actual scenes of combat, between individuals as well as armies, in the personal characterizations, and most of all N. P. Cherkasov's portrayal of General Suvorov. This Cherkasov is surely one of the finest actors on the screen today. In fact the only other with which I can think to compare him is a Soviet actor by a nearly similar name, the famous Nikolai Cherkassov of *Baltic Deputy, Peter I,* and *Alexander Nevsky.* The role which Cherkasov has in *General Suvorov* is a test even for exceptional actors. Military heroes are old stuff in drama and literature; a slip in the direction of bluffness, sentimentality, stern-profile heroics, or lovable cussedness could have turned the movie into a stereotype. Of course, Cherkasov had the great advantage

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of a far more accurate script and direction than usually goes into historical films. Nevertheless he contributes his full share to the picture's success. His Suvorov is genuinely courageous and lovable, presented with an intelligent flexibility and freshness of approach. A striking feature of Cherkasov's acting is his ability to go from mood to mood—indignation, enthusiasm, mockery, affection—swiftly and naturally. The half-humorous, half-savage irony he expends on Emperor Paul and his cardboard generals during the visit to the palace is something you're not likely to forget. He is supported by an excellent cast, especially the soldiers who act as a complement rather than a foil to the general's personality. The fine direction of the film is by V. Pudovkin.

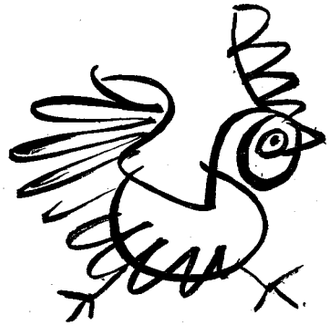
The rulers of Old Russia were not grateful to Suvorov for his victories. It was difficult, and dangerous, for them to acknowledge that a general who hooted at powdered wigs and respected his soldiers could be a hero. Suvorov's role in Russian history was omitted or played down in school texts under czarism. Now the Soviets have reconstructed the full story of a people's hero and patriot, to reveal it to the world in dramatic form. *General Suvorov* has been released in this country by Artkino and is currently playing at the Stanley Theater in New York. It should be seen as widely as possible.

BARBARA GILES.

Red Army Songs

Several new album recordings . . . Ravel, Handel, and Bach.

THE record companies, quick to detect a renewed interest in Russian music, are hurriedly marketing their old pressings and are at present recording new sets. Columbia has issued an album of modern Russian orchestral music, while both Columbia and Keynote have issued albums of Red Army songs performed by the Red Army chorus of the USSR under the direction of A. V. Alexandrov. Since there is only one duplication ("Meadowland"), it is advisable to secure both albums to get a more rounded picture of the repertoire of this splendid chorus. The Keynote collection contains some popular items including the stirring "If War Comes Tomorrow" and "From Border to Border," while the Columbia set departs from the use of only Russian



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folk songs by presenting a fervent rendition of "The Marseillaise" and an excerpt from the Rimsky-Korsakov opera "May Night."

It is axiomatic that singing comes as natural to Russians as baseball to Brooklyn, but there have always been musical skeptics who suggested that this naturalness was synonymous with crudity, and they cast serious doubts on the Russians' ability to develop a first rate, polished choral ensemble. These records completely refute that nonsense. The Red Army Chorus' precision, attack, coloring, blend, pitch, tonal beauty can rival that of the world's best vocal ensembles. Their singing emerges with a unique gusto and deep affirmation. It is a spirit which cannot be acquired merely by practice, discipline, or even the highest standards of technical training. It is a manifestation springing from a people boundlessly confident in what they are building and defending. These melodies sing out a great V across the earth. LOU COOPER.

★

AN INTERESTING rendition of Ravel's "Bolero" is presented by the Grand Orchestre Symphonique under the direction of Piero Coppola, who takes the tempo much slower than usual. This unorthodoxy in no way affects the hypnotic power of the music's persistent rhythm, but rather heightens the mounting excitement resulting from the repetition of the theme and the pounding power of the orchestra. Slower, perhaps—but we'll bet our last needle that you find it exciting. (Victor $2.50)

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GOINGS ON

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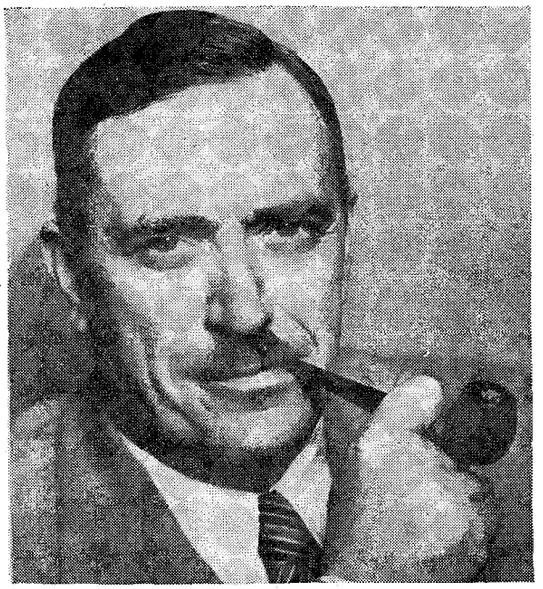

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Other prominent leaders in labor, religious and cultural fields will be announced later.

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clusion in a concerto for a single instrument with nothing to challenge its dominance. Needless to say, Schnabel's performance is superb in all respects. (Victor $2.50)

MICHAEL T. AMES.

"Men of Destiny"

Inept drama and questionable research sources feature these radio programs.

HAVING four choice Sunday half hours unexpectedly left vacant by the demise of a commercial program, the National Broadcasting Company is ambitiously devoting the time to a sustaining series dramatizing the lives of the four men who (NBC quote) "guide our destinies in this time of crisis for all mankind." Reading from left to right, the men of destiny are Stalin, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Hitler. Unfortunately, the results of this hopeful excursion into contemporary biography so far have been disappointing.

The first of the series was a juvenile and inept drama about Churchill that was on the creative level of a movie fan magazine "personality" story. "Stalin: Man of Steel," the second broadcast, was more than a badly written radio play; it was slander. The script was the work of a free lance radio writer, a former newspaperman by the name of Gerald Holland. He received credit for his writing at the end of the program. However, NBC did not care to announce the revealing fact that Holland's script was based on material furnished by the dean of professional Red-haters, Eugene Lyons! On this theory of what constitutes an authoritative research source, NBC should have gone to Dr. Goebbels for background on Churchill.

Most of the standard fictions in the repertoire of the anti-Soviet "biographers" of Stalin were dusted off for use in this spiteful and preposterous history. In the course of thirty minutes of a radio play that was as badly produced as it was written, several million Americans were told (through the mouths of characters who all spouted a Mischa Auer comedy Russian dialect), that the man who leads one-sixth of the world and the first successful defense against fascism is everything Hitler's propaganda agents say he is. Trotsky was glorified and the history of the Russian Revolution distorted.

The wind-up to the broadcast was an absurd scene in which Stalin visits his mother and she laments the fact that he became head of the USSR instead of a priest. Stalin laughs, a sinister, menacing laugh, like that of radio's "Shadow."

The following Sunday the series turned to a biography of Hitler, also written by Mr. Holland. The author pulled his punches constantly, and his explanation of the causes of fascism was, to say the least, sketchy. What might have been a powerful indictment of Hitler and Hitlerism turned out to be an obvious and undramatic story about a bad man who had an unhappy childhood.

LLOYD E. TRENT.

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